

### World leaders send more goodwishes to King

MAYO CLINIC (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received Saudi Ambassador at Washington Prince Bandar Ben Sultan, who delivered greetings from Saudi King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz. In addition, King Hussein also received cables of good wishes and speedy recovery from Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali, Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Senegalese President Abdo Diouf and Chilean President Eduardo Fierri.

# Jordan Times

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## House panel challenges government's explanation on Amman's water crisis

### Deputy: Human error explanation makes no sense

By Ahmad Khatib  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A parliamentary committee investigating recent water pollution in Amman has challenged the government's explanation that "human and operational errors" at the main Zai Water Treatment Plant feeding the capital caused the crisis.

The Lower House's Agriculture and Water Committee, in a report to be formally published on Tuesday, blamed the foul-smelling and murky tap water supplies on extra quantities of algae found in water coming from two main sources of supply — Lake Tiberias and the Yarmouk River.

A draft copy of the committee's report, carried by the Arabic daily Al-Dustour on Sunday, also called for the dismissal and trial of Water Minister Munther Haddadin and Jordan Water Authority Secretary-General Munther Khleifat for their role in "causing the problem."

Deputy Salameh Haid, head of the committee, said on Sunday his commission had not yet "finalized its report" on the water crisis that has scared many citizens since July 5 when many, especially in

Western Amman, complained of discoloured water supplies with a strange smell and taste.

He insisted that "the information provided in Al-Dustour's article were accurate as they were based on studies of water samples conducted" by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) on July 16 (See full translation of the committee's draft report on page 7).

But he said he could not confirm whether the committee would press for legal action against Dr. Haddadin and Mr. Khleifat for their water policies.

"The government's explanation that the water problem resulted from human error does not make any sense," he told the Jordan Times. "If this was the case, then the water problem could have been rectified in a day or two."

The Water Ministry said last week it had detected the cause of the discoloured and foul-smelling water and brought the situation under control.

But it steered clear of specifying the source of the problem — initially blamed on algae found in water supplies that soared to higher than usual levels because of hot weather conditions.

The government also denied that the water was contaminat-

ed. However, increasing diarrhoea and nausea-related cases were admitted to several hospitals then.

According to Al-Dustour, the Lower House committee concluded that the Zai Water Treatment Plant failed to deal with "the high organic substances" caused by algae present in water supplies coming from Lake Tiberias and the Yarmouk River.

"Without any doubt, it is obvious to the committee that the plant could not handle supplies of organic substances in addition to extra water supplies coming into the station after the pumps were formally inaugurated this year," the daily quoted the committee's draft report as saying.

Water ministry officials and World Health Organisation experts called in to check water supply procedures, were not available for comment on the committee's findings.

Dr. Haddadin said last week that officers manning the Zai plant should have reduced the volume of water passing through the filters and should have increased the amount of carbon used to treat water "as soon as they noticed the smell and colour of the water."

"But for more than 24 hours,



Lower House Deputy Bassam Haddadin discusses with Water Minister Munther Haddadin at Parliament on Sunday the water crisis issue. Bassam is an opposition deputy in Parliament (Photo by Youssef Allan)

they did not implement any of these measures," he acknowledged.

Dr. Haddadin, who mainly negotiated articles of the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty under which Jordan regained a larger share of water supplies from its neighbour, said the

ministry would take legal action against "negligent parties."

Owners of several supermarkets and groceries said on Sunday that many residents were scrambling to buy scarce supplies of bottled spring water despite government assur-

ances over the safety of domestic water supplies.

Agents selling domestic water filtering systems have also reported brisk sales in the past three weeks.

Roey Gilad, spokesman for the Israeli embassy in Amman, rejected popular claims that Israel was supplying Jordan with polluted water from Lake Tiberias.

These concerns were fed by claims from several deputies that the 1994 peace treaty did not say whether water coming from Lake Tiberias should or can be used for drinking.

"Israel is supplying Jordan with drinking water from the same source it is using to supply Israeli citizens," Mr. Gilad told the Jordan Times. "Whatever happens to water once it crosses the border is an internal Jordanian matter."

Meanwhile, the Jordan Water Authority announced late on Saturday that it would implement a new water pumping schedule for domestic use in Amman, cutting direct supplies to once a week from twice every seven days.

It blamed the move on the inability of the Zai plant to deal with routine water demand until all its filters were cleaned.

## Anani leaves for Tehran with King's invitation to Khatami to visit Jordan

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani said Sunday that he will visit Iran next week to deliver a message from His Majesty King Hussein to Iranian President Mohammad Khatami.

Dr. Anani, who is also the foreign minister, said that he will meet with his counterpart Kamal Kharrazi and hold talks on the political and economic cooperation between the two states.

During the several-day visit which will start on Saturday, an invitation will be extended to Mr. Khatami to visit the Kingdom, Dr. Anani said.

The minister told the Jordan Times that among the issues expected to be raised with Iranian officials are Iranian-Arab relations, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

"After a break of several years, we believe that with the new political leadership in Iran the time is ripe to develop and enhance bilateral ties on all levels," Dr. Anani said.

The minister said that the two sides will discuss the establishment of a joint venture to produce phosphate fertiliser in Jordan

which will mostly be exported to Iran.

"We will also discuss how to increase trade volume between the two nations. We shall explore the industrial fields where we can launch joint ventures," Dr. Anani said.

The Kingdom's diplomatic ties with Iran resumed in the early nineties after Amman and Tehran severed ties during the eight-year-old Iraq-Iran war.

However, in 1995 Jordan expelled the first secretary in the Iranian embassy, Saeed Batini, charging the official of "performing acts that contradicted with his diplomatic status."

Several Iranian officials have visited the Kingdom in the past four years and discussed ways of improving ties with the Kingdom.

The presidential elections in Iran last year, which brought about the moderate leadership of Mr. Khatami, was a major factor that enhanced Tehran's ties not only with Jordan but also with most of the Arab states.

Last November, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, visited Iran to attend the Organisation of Islamic Conference meetings during which he met with Mr. Khatami and other senior officials.

## Egypt: Recent peace talks 'waste of time'

ALEXANDRIA (AP) — Foreign Minister Amr Musa on Sunday accused Israel of impeding Middle East peace negotiations and described the recent talks between Israelis and Palestinians as a "waste of time." Egypt, the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel, has been a broker in Arab-Israeli peace efforts.

Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians broke down in March 1997 after Israel began construction of a new Jewish neighbourhood in Arab east Jerusalem. The Palestinians want the Arab sector, which was occupied by Israel in the 1967

Middle East war, as the capital of their would-be state.

The two sides have been holding talks for the past two weeks on a U.S. proposal to get the peace process back on track, but there have been no signs of a breakthrough.

"What is going on now is merely a matter of procrastination, delay and waste of time without any signs of real progress," Mr. Musa told reporters after presenting a report on the situation to President Hosni Mubarak.

The two sides have been discussing a compromise proposed by the United States that calls

for Israel to withdraw from 13 per cent of the West Bank territory it controls.

The Palestinian National Authority has accepted the U.S. initiative, but Israel says it jeopardises its security.

Mr. Musa told reporters Sunday there has been no progress in getting Israeli approval of the American initiative.

"The international community should not stand as a spectator to the peace initiative as it collapses," Mr. Musa said.

He added: "The situation has entered a vicious circle without any hope of progress now or, according to logic, in the

future. The elements and potentials of such progress are not clear under the current Israeli policy." After meeting with chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat in Cairo on Sunday, Mr. Musa said Israel was not taking the talks seriously.

"It is obvious that they [the Israelis] are wasting time and the result [of recent negotiations] is in actuality zero," he said.

He said the Palestinians believe the Israelis "were not speaking with any seriousness and did not put forth any new suggestions."

## Shukri urges government to reconsider sale of 40% of JTC

By Ahmed Naser  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The process of selling off 40 per cent of the Jordan Telecommunication Company's (JTC) equity to a strategic partner will have to be revisited, according to Ali Shukri, chairman of the company's board of directors.

"If the government pushes ahead with the JTC sale, then they will have to explain themselves," Mr. Shukri told journalists at a press conference yesterday.

"Our job is to give the reality to whoever is negotiating with the strategic partner," he added, stressing that the statement he made Saturday to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, did not mean that the option of a strategic partner should be eliminated.

Mr. Shukri said he preferred that local investors get priority to the purchase of JTC's equity.

In the coming few days, the JTC will submit its recommendations to the Higher Ministerial Committee for Privatisation, he added.

"According to an official source requesting anonymity, the Committee will convene before the end of the week to study JTC's recommendations as well as

other issues related to privatisation. Cabinet ministers contacted by the Jordan Times said they could not comment yesterday.

During the press conference, Mr. Shukri proposed that JTC's equity be put up for public subscription and later for sale on the Amman Financial Market (AFM).

One broker at the AFM told the Jordan Times that he had doubts about the prospect of selling JTC shares in the market.

"The general mood here at the AFM does not support this after the balance sheets of blue chip firms were made public," he said.

He added that since the JTC shares are considered blue chip stocks, investors are not likely to rush and buy them at first offer but would rather wait for their float on the AFM to buy them at cheaper rates. A banking executive, who echoed the same view, added that any delay in the privatisation process and the double talk about the fate of the JTC has created contradictions that do not encourage investment.

"What we now actually need is a move to restore investment credibility," the banker said.

Asked if abandoning the idea of the strategic partner would negatively affect investment cli-

mate in the country, Mr. Shukri said that it is up to owners to decide prices and not buyers.

Among the reasons for Mr. Shukri's preference to sell the JTC to local investors rather than a strategic partner are the prices offered by the two bidders, threats to security and the conditions for pushing the sale through.

According to news reports, the U.K. Price Waterhouse consultants have evaluated JTC's assets at \$1.2 billion. And according to sources in the industry, the British giant Cable and Wireless offered \$320 million for the 40 per cent stake in the JTC, and the American Southern Bell, offered half that amount.

Mr. Shukri hinted that JTC was worth more than that and said that the JTC had made its own price study, which it will make public at a later date.

Mr. Shukri also has reservations about the conditions, under which a strategic partner would come in. He said that even though the strategic partner will only buy 40 per cent of JTC, one of the conditions for the sale is four out of seven seats on the company's Executive Council would go to the new partner.

Asked how the sale would threaten security, Mr. Shukri said that since the Public Security

Department and Armed Forces networks are linked to JTC's network, a foreign partner would have access to these networks and that unliking these networks would drain the government's treasury.

Meanwhile, Hashem I and 2, two satellite data-communications stations run by His Majesty's Royal Communications will continue to operate and will offer services to the JTC and the private sector, according to Mr. Shukri.

These two stations, however, will not be licensed as a separate telecommunication provider, he added. The two stations that were recently upgraded, according to industry sources, can carry up to 34 megabytes of telecommunication traffic. This amount of bandwidth allows around 2,000 concurrent phone calls or 8,000 Internet surfers to browse comfortably.

Meanwhile, according to Mr. Shukri, the JTC estimates that it will achieve profits of around JD189 million by the end of this year after it starts offering its eight new value added services, some of which will be made public by the end of the year. The JTC expects to increase its subscriber base to 600,000 by the end of this year and one million by the year 2000.

## ARAB BANK PLC GIVEN NEW RATING

Senior Debt : assigned AA-  
Short-Term : assigned TBW-1  
Issuer : assigned B

Thomson BankWatch is pleased to announce the assignment of new ratings for Arab Bank PLC. The rating exercise for Arab Bank was indeed unique as the legal structure of the bank is unlike anything previously seen, even when compared to developed markets. While typically it is unusual to split a rating as such, the very nature of the legal structure of Arab Bank necessitates such an action.

Arab Bank PLC can lay claim to one of the longest and decidedly the most distinguished histories of any bank in the Middle East region. The bank's origin pre-dates World War II and has continued on during periods of regional turmoil and strife that would have severely tested and destroyed the resolve of many institutions not just regionally but globally, if similar circumstances were applied. During all of these periods, the bank has not just weathered each crisis, but in every case benefited and emerged even stronger.

Arab Bank can be described in at least two ways. The first way, the bank is clearly a survivor. The second way is that the bank's own name can be a misnomer, especially from risk profile perspective. While the bank is headquartered in Amman Jordan, the overall country risk profile resembles some of the best banks domiciled in both Western Europe and the United States. The bank brings with it, a long history and a philosophy that its customers are indeed "first and most important". It is this philosophy that has created the bank that exists today and that can lay claim to be a peer bank when compared to some of the best banks in the world. This philosophy has also moved Arab Bank into being one of the only true "flight to quality" banks in the Middle East.

Arab Bank is diversified over a broad geography where operations comprising more than 80% of consolidated activities are conducted outside of Jordan. The unique capital structure enables the bank ratings to be considered independent of any sovereign rating for the country in which the Arab Bank is headquartered. Further there are sufficient legal precedents and opinions which indicate that any potential extraterritorial seizure of Arab Bank external assets by local regulatory authorities is highly unlikely and not valid under most if not all legal jurisdictions. Accordingly, as the vast majority of Tier 1 capital, and assets are

outside of Jordan thereby greatly diminishing the element of transfer risk and as a hard currency (US Dollar) is the functional currency for Arab Bank, Thomson BankWatch employs the global ratings scale for the Arab Bank rating. Asset quality is extremely solid given the history of expertise cultivated and applied to lending. Additionally, a conservative level of loan loss reserves is maintained to fully cover non-performing loans. The tenor of the loan portfolio is quite short with 80% scheduled to mature within one year as of YR97. Total loans for Arab Bank typically represent less than 50% of assets.

The stability of earnings is enhanced by the conservative asset/liability management as well as the lending strategy and geographic diversification. Also supporting the sound financial position is a healthy capital base with the BIS Tier 1 ratio exceeding 12% and shareholders' equity to assets of nearly 9%.

Arab Bank is well established and dynamic, as demonstrated in its sound performance and impressive perseverance. Management has planned for any potential disruption in the Arab Region by building capital in its branches in some of the

world's major financial centers. Even in the unlikely event of a regional difficulty affecting more than Jordan, Arab Bank has more than sufficient asset liquidity to repay all foreign currency obligations. As Arab Bank has several sizable subsidiaries, affiliates, and an extensive network of international branches, the bulk of consolidated equity is housed outside of Jordan. Management has coordinated the broad geography of banking operations through the hubs in Amman, London and Geneva.

The underlying strategy has been a focus on serving Arab communities worldwide, particularly through trade finance both on and off of the balance sheet. Credit quality is solid, as are loan loss reserves and capital. Management prefers to maintain a high degree of liquidity mainly in conservative inter-bank placements and government securities. Consequently, returns have been modestly lower than those of diversified international banks. Management's successful and well developed strategy provides the foundation for the continued sound expansion of operations.



## Famine worsens as peace talks start in Sudan

NAIROBI (AFP) — Peace talks between Sudan's Islamic junta and rebels from the mainly black south get under way in Addis Ababa on Tuesday as aid agencies let the weakest famine victims die despite the biggest food air-lift in history.

No one is expecting a breakthrough at the three-day conference in the Ethiopian capital, but observers say it could clarify positions and advance the process enough for an agreement to hold further talks.

The civil war is Africa's longest, with the latest round lasting for 15 years, and the death toll since 1983 estimated at more than a million people.

In Khartoum, Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustapha Osman Ismail urged the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to give its delegation a full mandate to negotiate.

Sunday newspapers quot-

ed Mr. Ismail as saying the government delegation he was leading to the talks had been mandated to "take final decisions" on issues of self-determination for southern Sudan, state-religion relations, a ceasefire and relief work.

Floods and famine are endemic in Sudan, but the war is displacing hundreds of thousands of people and halting normal planting and harvesting.

The famine is threatening more than 2.5 million people, mostly in the south, but much of the relief food is being diverted to the two armies, aid workers say.

The soldiers on both sides are fit, AFP correspondents have observed, but skin-and-bone civilians staggering into feeding centres say they are sacrificing the weakest members of their families as the strongest pick leaves and sour wild fruit along the way.

Aid workers, with limited food to distribute, are giv-

ing it to those with the best chances of surviving, AFP correspondents have observed.

A three-month ceasefire in ill-defined southern areas hardest hit by famine in Africa's largest country was declared successively in mid-July by the SPLA, the government of President Omar Al Bashir, and leaders of rebel splinter groups who defected to the government side and signed a peace pact with Khartoum in April last year.

But fighting is continuing in many parts of the south, according to reports from Khartoum, and also in the north, where armed dissidents have allied with the SPLA.

The SPLA appears confident, despite its failure to capture the major southern towns of Wau and Juba, while Khartoum is having problems with young conscripts who are reluctant to go to the front.

The United States, which

has branded Sudan a "terrorist state," supports the rebels — at least morally — and so do the neighbouring countries of Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The rebels also appear to have broad support from the largely animist and Christian southerners despite local clashes — often based on tribe — with free-lance warlords and former rebel splinter groups.

The rebel team is to be led by Salva Kiir, deputy to SPLA leader John Garang, which some in Khartoum have seen as a sign that the SPLA was serious about the talks.

The Sudanese government delegation is composed of two teams: a negotiating team led by Mr. Ismail and a consultative team led by Assistant President Riek Machar, who chairs the South Sudan Coordination Council.

The Tuesday-to-Thursday talks will "start from where we left off in Nairobi,"

where the last round of peace talks was held May 4-6, SPLA spokesman Pagan Amum told AFP.

Those discussions ended inconclusively, with the government delegation declaring them a success and the SPLA branding them a failure.

The two sides agreed then to hold a referendum on "unity or outright secession" for the south.

But they set no date for that poll, failed to agree on the area it would cover, and reached no accord on the separation of state and religion.

Since then, the government has instituted a new constitution, which it said was approved by 96.7 per cent of voters in a referendum, but the document is ambiguous both on religion and the right to form political parties.



Palestinian journalist Taher Shriteh stands in front of his International Freedom of the Press Award Sunday after the Israeli High Court agreed to allow the journalist to travel abroad but not to enter Israel. Shriteh who has worked for Reuters, the New York Times, CBS News, and the BBC was barred from leaving Gaza for the last four years by the Israeli General Security Services because they claim he is connected to the Islamic militant Hamas group. Shriteh denied all allegations and will now be permitted to leave Gaza via the Rafah border which is the Israeli-controlled crossing point between the Gaza Strip and Egypt (Reuters photo)

## Palestinian journalist gets partial freedom

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel agreed on Sunday to allow an award-winning Palestinian journalist, barred from leaving Gaza during most of the last four years, to travel abroad but not to enter Israel.

A lawyer from the state attorney's office announced the lifting of the ban during an Israeli High Court hearing on a petition filed by Taher Shriteh, 37, who has worked for Reuters, the New York Times, CBS News and the BBC.

But no decision was reached on Mr. Shriteh's main request — to enter Israel for work and to cross Israel to reach the West Bank. Israel says Mr. Shriteh was active in the Islamist Hamas group, an allegation he emphatically denies.

"He is no longer barred from leaving through Rafah," said Fint Nitzan of the state attorney's office, referring to the Israeli-controlled crossing point between the Gaza Strip

and Egypt. Mr. Shriteh has reported from Gaza since 1987 and was awarded the International Freedom of the Press Award in 1993 by the National Press Club in Washington. Over the years he has been jailed by both Israel and the Palestinians.

In a written response to Mr. Shriteh's petition, the state attorney said the Gaza-based journalist posed a "danger to the security of the country and the region." The state attorney said Mr. Shriteh, barred by Israel from attending his own hearing, was "an active Hamas member who carried out various tasks for the group" and received financial backing from Hamas.

Mr. Shriteh said the Israeli allegations were fabricated to try to restrict Palestinian news coverage of events in the area and prevent journalists from travelling freely.

He said the only contact he had with Hamas involved his work as an independent journalist.

"I am not affiliated with Hamas in any way and I don't even identify with the group's goals," Mr. Shriteh said in an affidavit presented to the court. "I not only support the peace process but I specifically support the Oslo process," he said, referring to the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement negotiated in Norway in 1993 which Hamas rejects.

Judges did not rule on the question of Mr. Shriteh's affiliation with Hamas, saying the country had a right to bar entry to non-Israelis without having to provide reasons.

They said Mr. Shriteh should take his appeal to a joint Israeli-Palestinian security committee and could return to the High Court if it was rejected.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### New independent paper hits Tehran newsstands

TEHRAN (AFP) — A new independent newspaper, Arya, hit the newsstands in the Iranian capital Sunday. Arya (meaning Aryan) wrote in its first editorial that it would "not follow a particular political line." "We primarily want to be a paper to inform our readers and to reflect the views of all political factions," its managing director, Mohammad Reza Zohdi, told AFP. "But we leave it to our readers to judge." Iranian authorities have issued close to 1,000 permits for publications, almost doubling the number from before moderate cleric President Mohammad Khatami was elected in May 1997.

### Iranian exiles blame Baghdad ambush on Tehran

BAGHDAD (R) — Iranian agents tried to blast a vehicle with a rocket-propelled grenade outside the opposition Mujahideen Khalig's headquarters in Baghdad on Saturday night, the exile group said on Sunday. The rocket missed by a few metres, guards at the headquarters fired back and the ambusher fled, the Mujahideen said. No one was hurt. The statement said it was the 64th "terrorist and military operation by the Mullah's regime since 1993" against Mujahideen bases in Iraq. The group uses Iraq as a springboard for attacks inside Iran and has several camps, equipped with tanks, heavy guns and helicopter gunships, close to the borders with Iran. Mujahideen bases have been the target of air and rocket attacks by Iran and their office in Baghdad, now ringed with concrete wall, has weathered several mortar and bomb attacks.

### Romanian prime minister arrives in Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Romanian Prime Minister Radu Vasile arrived in Israel Sunday as part of an official visit at the invitation of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, officials said. During his four-day visit, Mr. Vasile is scheduled to meet with Mr. Netanyahu, President Ezer Weizman, Israeli businessmen and representatives of the 450,000 Israelis of Romanian origin. He will also visit the Israel Airframe Industries and the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum in occupied Jerusalem. The two countries are also expected to sign agricultural and investment cooperation agreements. Annual bilateral trade amounts to \$300 million, making Romania Israel's second largest trading partner in Eastern Europe after Russia. Romania is the only former Communist bloc country that did not break off ties with Israel following the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Bucharest also played a role in the birth of the Egyptian-Israeli peace process. Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1979.

## Clan elders broker peace deal between warring sides in Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Abgal clan elders have reached an agreement to end renewed hostilities in Mogadishu and neighbouring Middle Shabelle region, which left four people dead on Saturday, a prominent elder told AFP here on Sunday.

"The killings were clan-motivated, but we have managed to stop it," politician and elder Dahir Mohammad "Dayah" said, explaining that the elders had agreed to stop witch-hunting, while investigations continued to find the killers.

The latest killings had been triggered by earlier hostilities in neighbouring Jawhar between the heavily armed subclans of Agon-Yar and Da'ud gunmen, both Abgal and loyal to Somali

strongman Ali Mahdi Mohammad, which left at least three people dead. Before the Saturday killings, three other people were machine-gunned in Karan district of north Mogadishu on Friday, an Islamic court official said on Sunday.

Attempts to find the killers in the divided Somali capital has interrupted movements of people and confined their activities to sub-clan level, a resident of north Mogadishu's Karan residential district said.

But Mr. Dayah pledged that the latest incidents would not trigger an all-out fighting in north Mogadishu. "Business centres closed in north Mogadishu on Saturday were reopened normally on Sunday after the

peace deal, said to have been negotiated by prominent clan elder Ali Ugas Abdulle," Mr. Dayah said. The move came only a day before Mogadishu's principal warlords were to meet to approve the draft laws on joint administration of the war-torn Somali capital, prepared by a technical committee.

Mr. Ali Mahdi, Hussein Mohammad Aided, Osman Hassan Ali "Atto" and Mohammad Qanyare Afrah were meeting at the Sahafi Hotel in south Mogadishu on Sunday to finalise a deal to reopen Mogadishu's main seaport and airport that have remained closed since 1995 due to disputes between warring clan factions.

## Israeli army chief of staff warns of Iranian threat

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Army Chief of Staff Major General Shaul Mofaz warned Sunday that Iran's attempts to develop nuclear weapons and long-range missiles would endanger Israel, an army spokesman said.

"Iran is making efforts to achieve missile capabilities and develop non-conventional weapons," Mr. Mofaz told officers at a civilian defence base in the centre of the country, the spokesman said.

"The combination of these two capabilities brings danger in the long-term," Mr. Mofaz added. "To oppose the second capability, we will need a special [defence] budget in the coming years." Iran tested a new missile late last month

said has a range of 1,300 kilometres, which would bring most Middle East countries, including Israel, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, within its reach.

Israeli weapons experts estimated that the Iranian Shahab-3 missile will be fully operational within a year or less.

The Israeli government said the test took place several months before its own intelligence reports said it would and voiced alarm that Iran, which it has considered its main enemy since the 1979 Islamic revolution, poses an increased security risk.

Iran's President Mohammad Khatami on Saturday branded Israel as a major threat to the region because of

its weapons of mass destruction.

"Israel has turned into one of the most dangerous arsenals for atomic, chemical and biological weapons, constantly threatening the world," he said, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA.

Mr. Khatami added that Iran was opposed to weapons of mass destruction and posed "no threat to any friendly countries."

Israel and the United States have repeatedly accused Moscow of not cracking down on Russian companies that reportedly sell conventional and nuclear weapons know-how to Iran.

## Extremist Jews protest near mosques in Jerusalem

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli police prevented 40 members of the extremist Jewish group the Temple Mount Faithful from entering the compound of the Dome of the Rock here on Sunday, witnesses told AFP.

Led by Guershon Salomon, the extremist group tried to get into the site which houses the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque, the third most holy site in Islam.

Security forces stopped the

group from gathering at one of the entrances to the compound, the witnesses said.

The Israeli police forbid Jews from praying inside the compound, built on the supposed site of Solomon's temple, in order to avoid confrontation with Muslims.

On Sunday Israel commemorated the most tragic day in the Jewish calendar, the ninth of the Hebrew month of Av, which marks the destruction of the temple

first by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC and then by the Roman emperor Titus in AD 70.

Under heavy police protection, thousands of Jews went to pray at the Wailing Wall, the last remnant of the old temple.

Pious Jews observe the day by fasting and, out of respect, banks, most cafes and restaurants in West Jerusalem were shut.

## JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO

- 15:10 ..... Cartoon — Highlander
- 15:30 ..... Drama — The Word Day of My Life
- 16:00 ..... Drama — Neighbours
- 16:30 ..... Doc — Last Frontiers
- 17:00 ..... French Programme — Thalassa
- 18:00 ..... Acapulco Bay
- 19:00 ..... Le Journal
- 19:15 ..... French Programme — Science Actualite
- 19:30 ..... News headlines
- 19:35 ..... Comedy — Hope and Gloria
- 20:00 ..... Prospective
- 20:30 ..... Doc — War Lords
- 21:10 ..... Gone to the Dogs
- 22:00 ..... News in English
- 22:30 ..... Drama — Law and Order
- 23:10 ..... Drama — Bay Watch Night
- 23:59 ..... End of TX.

## PRAYER TIMES

- 04:19 ..... Fajr
- 05:47 ..... (Sunrise) Doha
- 12:42 ..... Dhuhur
- 16:22 ..... 'Asr
- 19:37 ..... Maghreb
- 21:04 ..... 'Isha

## CHURCHES

- St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweidat, Tel. 5920740
- Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 4632785
- St. Joseph Church, Tel. 4624590
- Terra Sancta Church, Tel. 4624590

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY AND CALENDAR

- 4622366 Anglican Church Tel. 4634853/4624811
- St. Abram Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
- Amman International Church Tel. 865897
- German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
- The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 511295
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
- St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
- Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
- Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
- Church of Presentation, Sweidat Tel. 5920146
- The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
- The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
- Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679
- The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
- The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
- The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

## WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

It will be hot, temperatures higher than average by 5 degrees centigrade, and winds northwesterly to northeasterly light to moderate. In Agaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. Amman..... 22/37 Agaba..... 29/43 Deserts..... 20/40 Jordan Valley..... 26/42

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 36, Agaba 42 Humidity readings: Amman 24 per cent, Agaba 27 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

- Ajloun..... 29
- Jerash..... 36
- Um Qays..... 35
- Madaba..... 35
- Petra..... 36
- Dead Sea..... 43

Food Control Centre..... 4637111 Civil Defence Department..... 4661111 Civil Defence Immediate Rescue..... 4630341 Civil Defence Emergency..... 199 Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777 Fire Brigade..... 4617101 Shmeisani Hospital..... 5353444 University Hospital..... 5664164 Al-Muasher Hospital..... 5667277 Al-Ahli, Abidat..... 5664164 Italian, Al-Muashreen..... 7771013 Al-Bashir..... 891611/15 Army, Marka..... 891611/15 Queen Alia Hospital..... 5602305/5602306 Amal Hospital..... 891611/15

AMMAN: The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery..... 921109 The Islamic, Abidat..... 5661317 Hussein Medical Centre..... 585856 Luzmila..... 403095 Khalidi Maternity..... 4642416 Akleh Maternity..... 4642416/2 Jabal Amman Maternity..... 4642362 Malhas, J. Amman..... 4636140 Palestine, Shmeisani..... 5607071 Shmeisani Hospital..... 5669131 University Hospital..... 5353444 Al-Muasher Hospital..... 5667277 Al-Ahli, Abidat..... 5664164 Italian, Al-Muashreen..... 7771013 Al-Bashir..... 891611/15 Army, Marka..... 891611/15 Queen Alia Hospital..... 5602305/5602306 Amal Hospital..... 891611/15

ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital..... 109983323 Zarqa National Hospital..... 109900560

- Repairs..... 4623101
- Abdali Tel. Repairs..... 5661101
- Jordan Television..... 4773111
- Radio Jordan..... 4774111
- Water Authority..... 5680100
- J. Electricity Authority..... 5815615
- Electric Power Co..... 4636381
- RJ Flight Information..... 44-53200
- Queen Alia Int. Airport..... 44-53200

HOSPITALS

- AMMAN: The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery..... 921109 The Islamic, Abidat..... 5661317 Hussein Medical Centre..... 585856 Luzmila..... 403095 Khalidi Maternity..... 4642416 Akleh Maternity..... 4642416/2 Jabal Amman Maternity..... 4642362 Malhas, J. Amman..... 4636140 Palestine, Shmeisani..... 5607071 Shmeisani Hospital..... 5669131 University Hospital..... 5353444 Al-Muasher Hospital..... 5667277 Al-Ahli, Abidat..... 5664164 Italian, Al-Muashreen..... 7771013 Al-Bashir..... 891611/15 Army, Marka..... 891611/15 Queen Alia Hospital..... 5602305/5602306 Amal Hospital..... 891611/15

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)5320-5, where a should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 44152700.

- Al Hikma Modern Hospital..... (01)9909732
- Al Hikma Modern Hospital..... (01)9909732
- IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital..... (02)275555
- Greek Catholic Hospital..... (02)272275
- Al Nafes Hospital..... (02)247100

AOABA: Princess Haya Hospital..... (03)314111

- ARRIVALS
- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 06:05 ..... Sanaa (RJ)
- 06:15 ..... Barcelona (add) (RJ)
- 09:30 ..... Damascus (RJ)
- 09:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)

- 06:20 ..... New Delhi (RJ)
- 10:30 ..... Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
- 10:55 ..... Beirut (RJ)
- 17:00 ..... Cairo (RJ)
- 17:30 ..... London (RJ)
- 17:40 ..... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
- 18:15 ..... Istanbul (RJ)
- 18:45 ..... Kuwait (RJ)
- 19:00 ..... Bangkok (RJ)
- 19:40 ..... Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
- 03:55 ..... Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
- 06:00 ..... Madras (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

- 10:30 ..... Cune (MS)
- 14:10 ..... Bahrain (GF)
- 15:05 ..... Vienna (OS)
- 15:40 ..... Doha (QR)
- 15:45 ..... Khartoum (SD)
- 19:05 ..... Frankfurt (LH)
- 19:45 ..... Dubai (EK)
- 22:15 ..... Istanbul (LY)
- 22:25 ..... Tel Aviv (LY)
- 22:30 ..... Beirut (ME)
- 23:45 ..... Athens, Beirut (CA)
- 01:30 ..... Amsterdam, Damascus (EK)

Royal Wings (RW)

- 10:20 ..... Agaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)
- 18:00 ..... Agaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
- 22:15 ..... Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
- 23:25 ..... Agaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

## DEPARTURES

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 07:15 ..... Beirut (RJ)
- 11:45 ..... Frankfurt, London (RJ)
- 12:35 ..... Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
- 12:45 ..... Kuwait (RJ)
- 12:50 ..... Istanbul (RJ)
- 13:15 ..... Cairo (RJ)
- 18:50 ..... Madras (add) (RJ)
- 21:15 ..... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
- 21:40 ..... Damascus (RJ)
- 22:05 ..... Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
- 22:25 ..... Al Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
- 23:25 ..... Tehran (RJ)
- 23:45 ..... Sanaa (RJ)

- Other Flights
- 06:15 ..... Istanbul (TK)
- 06:35 ..... Laraca (CY)
- 07:30 ..... Paris (AF)
- 08:20 ..... London (AF)
- 11:30 ..... Cairo (MS)
- 15:00 ..... Bahrain (GF)
- 15:30 ..... Vienna (OS)
- 16:45 ..... Doha (QR)
- 16:45 ..... Istanbul (SD)
- 20:45 ..... Dubai (EK)
- 23:10 ..... Tel Aviv (LY)
- 23:15 ..... Khartoum (SD)
- 23:55 ..... Beirut (ME)
- 02:30 ..... Amsterdam (KL)

Royal Wings (RW)

- 08:00 ..... Agaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
- 09:30 ..... Agaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
- 20:45 ..... Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)
- 21:30 ..... Agaba (from QAIA) (RW)

Home N  
NEXT VISITS BADIA FORCES: H...  
authorities are...  
for murder of...  
Drug add...  
on the r...  
Associations...  
drop boycott of...





REGENT VISITS BADIA FORCES: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday pays an inspection tour to the Royal Badia Forces in the eastern region accompanied by their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein and Prince Rashed Ben Al Hassan. Prince Hassan conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's greetings to the troop members (Petra photo)

## Authorities arrest two men for murder of Egyptian worker

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two men have been arrested in connection with the stabbing death of an Egyptian labourer in Ras Al Ein area last week, officials said on Sunday.

The body of Abdul Wahab Mohammad, 31, was found dumped in a deserted part of the downtown area on July 25, after assailants slit his throat and stabbed him five times.

On Saturday, police apprehended two Egyptian nationals, whom according to the officials, confessed to committing murdering the man after a financial dispute.

"The two men killed Mr. Mohammad because he owed them almost JD100 and he was unable to pay them back," the source told the Jordan Times Monday.

The two men, who were identified by officials as Najih, 31, and Mohammad, 30, lured the victim to a deserted area and killed him, the official said.

"The officials were able to apprehend the two after witnesses in the area testified that they saw the two fleeing the area," the source maintained.

The source added that Criminal Prosecutor Hassan Abdullah, who is handling the case, "has finished his interrogation and officially charged the two with premeditated murder."

He added that the two suspects will be transferred soon to the Criminal Court for trial.

Meanwhile, police examiners said they were still trying to determine if a man who died in Karak two weeks ago of a bullet wound to the head, was murdered or died of acci-

dental shooting.

"The body of the victim was badly decomposed, so that spoiled some evidence and is making it hard for us to determine the bullets points of entrance and exit," according to Head of the National Institute For Forensic Medicine Mo'men Hadidi.

The Karak criminal prosecutor had ordered that the body of Ismael R., 39, to be exhumed for a second autopsy after evidence surfaced that his death may have been a homicide rather than an accidental shooting, as it was originally ruled.

"We are examining the evidence under the microscope, and we are expecting to come up with a conclusion by the end of this week," Dr. Hadidi told the Jordan Times on Sunday.

## Drug addiction, usage on the rise — PSD

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Security Department (PSD) Sunday released figures about drug addiction in Jordan, showing that in 1997, addiction increased by 51 per cent over the number of the drug-related cases it dealt with in 1996.

Lieutenant Colonel Tayel Majali from the PSD's anti-narcotics department gave the figures at a seminar on drug addiction organised by the Ministry of Social Development.

In 1997, the department dealt with 492 drug-related cases compared to 32 in 1996, while the number of people involved in drug-related cases was 656 in 1996, rising to 803 in 1997, according to Lt. Col. Majali.

He said that the amount of heroin seized in 1997 reached 82 kilograms against 67 kilograms seized in 1996, while the number of pills seized in 1997 was three mil-

lion, compared to 260,000 in 1996.

Lt. Col. Majali reviewed users' "drugs of choice" and the extent of influence on users.

He attributed a growing problem of drug use and addiction to a greater rural-urban migration and the presence of non-Jordanian workers in the Kingdom among others.

Lt. Col. Majali pointed out that drug addicts are more exposed to AIDS among other diseases which are also root causes of many social and economic problems.

Minister of Social Development Mohammad Khair Mamsar called for a national plan to prevent narcotic abuse and addiction which can adversely affect production and drain resources by requiring spending for rehabilitation.

The minister underlined the need for educating the public

through schools, the family, the media and through religious teaching against the use of illegal drugs and called for stepped up efforts by the government's special task force to put an end to growing drug abuse.

The ministry already has preventive measures in place through an educational programme at schools, public awareness lectures and research on ways to prevent drug addiction.

Lt. Col. Majali noted that the country's new 1998 law on drugs allows for the treatment of addicts without subjecting them to penalties. This, he said, was designed to encourage addicts to seek treatment without fear of prosecution and start a new life. Presently, added Lt. Col. Majali, the addicts receive treatment at a special centre under the direct supervision of specialists.

## Associations consider appeal to drop boycott of top daily newspaper

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A leader of one of Jordan's 13 professional associations yesterday said that a publicised appeal from the Jordan Press Association yesterday to lift a nearly month-long boycott against a leading Arabic daily is likely to fall on deaf ears when the Professional Associations Council meets today to discuss the issue.

The professional associations — a driving force of opposition to "normalisation" of ties with Israel — last month initiated a boycott against Al Ra'i, the country's leading Arabic language daily, for the publication of an advertisement for the Israeli national carrier El Al. The syndicates require that their members resist normalisation, and members who violate the directives face expulsion from their associations.

"The professional associations have asked that Al Ra'i itself publish an apology and a rejection of normalisation before the boy-

cott is lifted," said Hosni Abu Gheida, president of the Jordan Engineers Association.

Upon news of the boycott, Al Ra'i initiated negotiations with the mostly Islamist-dominated associations to avert any damage such a measure could induce, saying to the council of association presidents that the advertisement had been a "mistake" and had not been authorised for publication by the management.

According to Mr. Abu Gheida, the newspaper's management also gave the presidents council a verbal assurance that Al Ra'i "rejects normalisation with the Zionist enemy," but that a following letter of apology to the professional associations failed to reiterate the same assurances.

The associations, with the exception of the Jordan Press Association, have maintained a hardline, insisting that Al Ra'i publish a statement rejecting normalisation and apologising for the "incident" in the same place that the ad

appeared, but Al Ra'i so far has not done so.

The JPA's appeal — published in both Al Ra'i and Al Dustour — stated that: "All Al Ra'i colleagues are committed to the decision taken by the JPA regarding normalisation with Israel."

"This is a stand based on the steadfast positions of Jordanian and Arab society that rejects normalisation with the Zionist entity that has usurped our land and properties. This decision is one that Jordanian journalists and press establishments have adhered to, among them Al Ra'i. The [Al Ra'i] management has confirmed its stand against normalisation and it is clear to the press association that the ad was published by mistake and without knowledge of the administration or editorial department. Therefore, the association's council urges the professional association presidents to rescind a decision that was hastily made."

## House opens debate on draft press law, drops requirement for 'accuracy' in reporting

'To be accurate, you need access to all information' — Rawabdeh

By Fairouz Abn-Ghazaleh  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — After months of speculation, the Lower House of Parliament on Sunday began debating its amended version of the government's controversial draft press and publications law.

The House National Guidance Committee's version of the draft scrapped the court's ability to imprison journalists and slashed financial penalties against journalists from tens of thousands of dinars to hundreds in some cases, while dropping other financial penalties all together. Additionally, the new amendments, if adopted by Parliament, would deny the court's right to suspend publications for certain violations.

The House extensively debated Article Five of the 60-article draft which stipulates that "publications should respect the truth and are prohibited from publishing anything that contradicts the principles of freedom and national responsibility, human rights and the values of the Arab Islamic Nation."

The committee has scrapped the article all together. Committee members said the article was "too broad and opens the way for negative speculation."

"I believe there is no room in this law for such an article," said longtime politician Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, considered among his

colleagues as perhaps the most knowledgeable deputy on legislative procedures.

Deputy Mahmoud Kharabshah, speaker of National Guidance Committee, defended the recommendations saying the committee sought diligently to find a balance that would serve the interest of the country.

But many legislators believed that Article Five was "crucial" and insisted on keeping it.

"I believe this is one of the most beautiful articles in this law," Islamist Deputy Abdullah Akalleh told the House. "Even if we oppose the government, we cannot deny that this is an important article that should be kept."

One deputy thanked the government for including the article.

"I thank the government and agree with its proposal," said Islamist Deputy Mohammad Azaidh, head of the House Public Freedoms Committee. "This article does not represent a problem but a general principal on which no two people disagree."

After almost 16 deputies voiced their opinion regarding the item, 30 deputies out of the 58 present voted in favour of keeping the provision as it appeared in the government's original draft, disregarding the committee's recommendation to scrap it.

Lawmakers, however, took into consideration the committee's proposal regarding Article Six of the

draft law and endorsed it after some discussion.

The committee amended a clause in the article which originally allowed "citizens, political parties, professional associations, cultural, social and economic societies...to express their opinions, thoughts and achievements related to their different domains and activities." The amended clause drops the language that restricts expression to "their different domains and activities."

"If the clause stays as it was originally written, it will become a real constraint to public freedoms," said Deputy Khalil Haddadin.

The House, which only managed to endorse nine articles in Sunday's session, also voted in favour of the committee's changes regarding the mandatory Code of Conduct for Journalists. The amendment combines two provisions in Article Seven: "balanced presentation of issues in an objective and comprehensive manner," and "accuracy, integrity and objectivity in presentation of news, analysis and commentary."

The new item reads as follows: "balanced, objectivity and integrity in presenting news." In the process of modification, however, the word "accuracy" was dropped. Deputy Soukai Shahattat, who thought the word was dropped by mistake, asked the House to reinstate "accuracy."

"In order to be accurate, you have to have access to all information," replied Deputy Rawabdeh. "Therefore, there is no need for that word 'accuracy'."

Much to the disappointment of many journalists and human rights advocates, the definition of journalists in the law remained untouched, thus keeping membership in the Jordan Press Association a mandatory condition for practising journalism.

Despite that, most journalists were pleased with the overall direction of yesterday's discussions, but agreed that most of the articles discussed were not controversial.

"Even though many deputies told us that there was pressure from the government to maintain some articles as they originally appeared in the draft, especially those related to capital requirements and penalties," said Jordan Press Association Council Member and Al Arab Al Yawm correspondent Nabil Ghishan. "the mood was, in general, good and we are optimistic."

The much-awaited discussion of the draft law drew a markedly larger audience to yesterday's session. More ministers, journalists and deputies attended, as well as Senate Speaker Zaid Rifai and Head of the Press and Publications Department Bilal Tal.

## Parties hail JTC inclination to favour local investment, remain divided on how to share telecom wealth

By Francesca Ciriaci  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Political parties on Sunday welcomed in principle the recent announcement that selling 40 per cent of the Jordan Telecom Company (JTC) to a foreign strategic partner may not be necessary.

Opposition leaders, however, argued that no shares in the government-owned JTC should be sold, even to local investors.

"We are in favour of an independent, private management, but we are against floating any shares," said Jamil Nimri of the Democratic Party of the Left (DPL).

"The JTC is a gold mine. Its value increases with time. In five years, it will be impossible for the government to buy it back."

Most opposition leaders also expressed fears that future sales to local investors could not be handled with due transparency.

"If shares are to be sold to a local company, then the public must be informed what offers have been put forth, and, most importantly of

all, where the money [from the sale] goes," said Munir Hamarneh, secretary general of the Jordan Communist Party.

Chairman of the board of directors at the JTC, Ali Shukri, declared on Saturday that there was no need to sell 40 per cent of the JTC to a strategic partner, as originally planned by the government.

In a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, he said: "Justifying the introduction of a strategic partner as a means to bringing in new technology into the company or increasing the volume of its [subscriber] base cannot be accepted."

Successive governments have held on to the idea of selling JTC shares to foreigners since 1996 despite strong internal opposition by Islamists and leftists. The privatisation drive was part of an IMF-sponsored restructuring programme launched in 1989.

But earlier this year, it appeared that the privatisation of the JTC could be less profitable than initially thought, with foreign consul-

tants evaluating its assets at \$1.2 billion.

The government came under attack at home, with the Lower House of Parliament in March asking for a privatisation bill. International observers did not spare their criticisms either.

On July 4, the London-based Economist commented: "[The government] is making a mess of privatisation, one of the last big items in the reform programme. Potential investors have been put off."

The Islamists, who fiercely opposed the introduction of strategic partners, insist that government economic policies should benefit larger sectors of society.

"Saturday's announcement [that JTC shares might not be sold to foreign companies] leaves the situation largely unchanged," Muslim Brotherhood analyst Ibrahim Gharaibeh told the Jordan Times on Sunday.

"The problem is not the privatisation process. The problem is that, whether shares are sold to foreign or local companies, only a

restricted elite will benefit."

The centrist National Constitutional Party (NCP), however, applauded the decision not to introduce foreign partners and saluted the possibility that local investors could instead take over the reins of the JTC.

"The announcement came after a thorough study, and it aims at giving Jordanians priority to invest in the telecommunication sector," said NCP spokesperson Khaldoun Nasser.

"If a local company can buy the latest technology and upgrade the JTC, why not give them the chance to do it?"

While most parties criticised the government's change of mind as proof that the earlier decision to invite a strategic partner was incompetent, Mr. Nasser said the change of plan was only a proof of continuous re-evaluation and reassessment in the interest of the nation.

"The fact that decision makers change their mind after thoroughly reviewing a matter is always a positive sign," he said.

## Associations ponder role in National Conference

### Brush off criticisms and withdrawals

By Francesca Ciriaci  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The professional associations will finalise today a unified stand vis-a-vis their participation in the National Conference of opposition parties and civil society institutions launched two months ago to counter government policies.

Hosni Abu Gheida, president of the 30,000-strong Jordan Engineers Association conceded that "there are different views" among the leaders of Jordan's 13 professional associations "on our approach to, and degree of involvement in, the National Conference."

Mr. Abu Gheida denied that any of the differences were of political or ideological nature.

"Simply, some people think that more preparations should have been made and our approach should be more detailed," he told the Jordan Times on Sunday, declining to elaborate any further.

Opposition leaders said the National Conference aims to unite civil society institutions on a common platform to halt normalisation with Israel, limit privatisation and economic liberalisation, strengthen ties with Syria and Iraq, and put forth educational reforms.

One hundred and fifty representatives launched the National Conference on June 13 and elected a 34-member executive committee headed by Islamic Action Front Secretary General Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

The conference has drawn criticism from both non-participating and participating parties and independent personalities, who accuse the organisers of violating democratic procedures in drafting the "National Salvation Plan." Last month former deputy Toujan Feisal, an independent, withdrew from the conference, firing at the Islamists for "running

the show" irrespective of other groups' suggestions and proposals.

Leaders of the Union of the Professional Associations — the majority of which are dominated by Islamists, but also include an active minority of left-led associations — have been meeting since Saturday to work out a unified stand vis-a-vis the conference.

Brushing off fears of further criticism and even withdrawals, the architects of the conference yesterday were eager to point out that the professional associations had already committed themselves to the conference.

"They are already in. They have been in since the beginning," said Salem Nahhas, secretary general of the Hashd Party.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### JERASH FESTIVAL

- \* Egyptian play "The Good and the Evil" at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Musical performance by the National Music Conservatory of Jordan at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Iraqi play "The Mantle" at Artimes Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Jad in Grandma Tales/Lebanon at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- \* Performances by the Jordan Armed Forces Orchestra (6:30 p.m.), Rozana Group of Jordan (7:00 p.m.), Izmir Folklore of Turkey (8:00 p.m.), Datina Group of Romania (9:00 p.m.), Sakumoh Group of Zimbabwe (10:00 p.m.), and U.K. Five-Star Circus (11:00 p.m.) at the Forum.

### LECTURES

- \* "Madaba Plains Project Update" by Dr. Larry Geraty, Dr. Sten Lohman, and Dr. Larry Herr at the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR), near the University of Jordan at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 534-6117). (There will be another lecture entitled "Ahila 1998" by Dr. Harold Mare on Tuesday Aug. 4 at 7:00 p.m.)

### CHILDREN'S PLAY

- \* King's Kids Performance (for children) at Haya Cultural Centre, Shmeisani, at 6:30 p.m. (There will be another performance on Tuesday Aug. 4 at 6:30 p.m.)

### EXHIBITIONS

- \* Photo exhibition on India at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 6.
- \* "Exhibition of Arab Sculptors" at the garden of the Weibdeh Muntazah, Jabal Weibdeh, until Aug. 8.
- \* "The Small Sculptors Exhibition" at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Aug. 8.
- \* Display of products at Jordan Design Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, off Wadi Saqra (Tel. 5699141/2), until August 6.



# Fighting erupts in Kosovo, major road blocked

PRISTINA, Serbia (R) — Fighting between ethnic Albanian separatists and Serb security forces erupted again in central Kosovo Sunday, closing the key east-west artery in the embattled province.

A Reuters team travelling between the Kosovo capital Pristina and the western town of Pec was turned back by security forces near Komorane.

Columns of smoke could be seen in the distance and heavily armoured military vehicles were present with their guns trained on the nearby hills.

Police at the roadblock said security forces had come under attack earlier from ethnic Albanian separatists near the heavily wooded Lapusnik pass.

They would not allow reporters to turn either right or left off the main road, insisting it was too danger-

ous. There were indications that armoured vehicles had moved up the road and that heavy fighting was going on.

A German ARD television crew also reported fighting around Srbica, some 30 km north of Komorane, early in the morning. They heard gunfire and saw smoke in the hills.

The Pristina-Pec road runs through the heart of Kosovo, a Serb province with a 90 per cent ethnic Albanian majority where separatist guerrillas are fighting for independence from Belgrade.

The road was open Saturday and used by aid workers trying to reach thousands of refugees displaced by a recent government offensive that recaptured large tracts of territory from the secessionist Kosovo Liberation Army

(KLA).

U.N. aid workers, making their first emergency aid delivery since the offensive, said they found thousands of Albanian civilians with children and some newborn infants sheltering on slopes above Malisevo, which was abandoned by guerrillas last Tuesday.

"The village of Crnovrana above Malisevo, where we delivered, is simply filled with people with many more visible further up the hills, living rough," said Eduardo Arboleda at the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees office in Kosovo.

Separately, the independent FoNet news agency reported Sunday that more than 10,000 refugees were gathered at Ucinj, a predominantly Albanian town on the coast in the Yugoslav Republic of Montenegro.

Yugoslav President

Slobodan Milosevic promised Friday to stop obstructing aid access to displaced Albanians.

More than 270 villages were shelled and at least 60,000 people uprooted from their homes by the offensive, according to ethnic Albanian human rights activists.

Mr. Milosevic has promised that the broad, week-long thrust against the KLA is over. However, Serb forces were Saturday within five km of the village of Junik, the main remaining rebel redoubt at the foot of the mountainous frontier with Albania.

On the political front, the Yugoslav and Macedonian foreign ministers are to meet later Sunday. Both countries are concerned about growing support for Kosovo separatists among Macedonia's own large Albanian minority.



A desperate camper holds onto the rope as rescuers drag him out of an inundated camping spot in the valley of Mount Chiri where more than 90 people are dead or missing due to flash floods (AFP photo)

## Death toll from floods rises to 34; at least 70 still missing

SEOUL (AP) — The death toll from flash floods rose to 34 Sunday as rescuers resumed searching rugged mountain valleys where hundreds of sleeping campers were swept away by swollen streams.

But heavy rains and raging currents hampered the search for 70 people missing in the Chiri Mountains, a popular hiking and camping site 220 kilometres south of Seoul, disaster relief officials said.

Rescue officer Lee Jong-Kun, 46, died in a hospital and another rescuer remained in critical condition after jumping into the water to save a man trapped in a car swept by flood water.

The bodies of two small children were pulled up early Sunday by police and soldiers searching down stream with flood lights.

Disaster officials feared the casualty figures could rise as families reported more missing people.

"Because the streams are so rapid and studded with

razor-sharp rocks, we believe nearly all those missing are dead," said a disaster official, speaking on customary condition of anonymity.

Family members gathered at makeshift relief centres in mountain valleys awaiting word on their missing relatives. The hopes of many seemed to fall as torrential rains poured down again Sunday morning in the thickly wooded mountains.

"The flood overwhelmed our tent in the twinkling of an eye. I held on to a tree branch. But my two boys, I could not find them. What should I do? How can I find them?" a father, identified only by his surname Kim, told MBC-TV in a quavering voice.

A rain front moving east from China dumped up to 30 centimetres of rain early Saturday in southern Korea. Lighter rain continued in the region throughout Saturday and into Sunday.

The hardest hit was the Chiri mountains, where a record 14 centimetres of

rain pined down in less than one hour. Campers compared the experience to "the heaven dumping rain with buckets".

Weather forecasters had failed to predict the heavy rain, and the sudden rise in the gushing streams caught unawares hundreds of vacationers camping along the scenic gorges.

"The weather forecasters said the monsoon was over and we went on vacation. Only if they warned us of the rain one hour earlier," Choi Jong-Il, 39, told the national news agency Yonhap. He lost his wife and two children to the floods.

Hundreds remained stranded. Rescuers used helicopters and ropes to guide the marooned campers across raging streams to safety.

The downpours also submerged homes and farmland, washed away roads and triggered landslides. Disaster officials estimated tentative property damage \$12 million.

TV footage showed large stretches of rice fields underwater and crumpled cars swept away in flood water.

Police said a number of people were killed in nearby villages.

A family of four were crushed to death when their home collapsed under a landslide Saturday.

Also Sunday, a dead North Korean civilian was found floating off the South Korean east coast. The military suspected the man was drowned and floated to the south.

After working overnight to clear a landslide that covered a large section of rail, authorities restored normal train service in the southwestern Cholla province early Sunday.

Two airports closed Saturday because of the rains resumed operations. But coastal ferry routes halted operations because of storm and high-wave warnings, stranding thousands of summer vacationers.

## Yugoslav tribunal to investigate suspect's death

AMSTERDAM (R) — The Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal said Sunday it would launch an internal inquiry into the death this weekend of a top suspect, the second in just over a month.

The investigation by the U.N. body will examine the death by heart attack Saturday morning of Bosnian Serb Milan Kovacevic, spokesman Christian Chatter said.

Mr. Kovacevic, 57, who died in his cell after guards failed to resuscitate him, was the only suspect on trial for genocide.

In Bosnia, Mr. Kovacevic's family told Reuters that they had received condolences on the death from all 27 tribunal detainees in custody — Serb, Croat and Muslim.

Mr. Kovacevic had a history of heart problems and was receiving medical treatment.

"All aspects of the death will be looked into," Mr. Chatter told Reuters.

No details of the inquiry, which was ordered by acting tribunal President Mohammad Shahabuddin, were available, he added.

The Dutch government will also conduct an inquiry into the death, following normal procedure, the tribunal has said.

Mr. Kovacevic died shortly after the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia released a report on the recent suicide of another prominent suspect.

On June 29, former Serb mayor of Vukovar Slavko Dokmanovic hanged himself in his cell in the tribunal's detention centre near The Hague as judges were considering their verdict.

The internal inquiry exonerated officials at the jail from any blame, saying all rules concerning safety and security were observed.

But Mr. Dokmanovic's defence lawyer said he had warned court officials that his client might kill himself and the Yugoslav government said it held the tribunal responsible for the death.

Mr. Dokmanovic had maintained he was innocent of complicity in one of the most notorious incidents of the Yugoslav war — the massacre of more than 200 hospital patients in the eastern Croatian town of Vukovar.

Mr. Kovacevic, a former hospital director, was accused of helping set up camps in the Prijedor region of northwestern Bosnia in which Muslims and Croats were raped, tortured and killed.

## De Klerk outraged by Bishop Tutu's claims

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — Former President Frederik de Klerk said Sunday he was "outraged" by claims that his government approved plans to develop biological weapons that would kill blacks only.

The accusation was made by Truth and Reconciliation Commission chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu after evidence to this effect was given by military scientists during a TRC hearing into the apartheid chemical and biological warfare programme.

"There was neither truth nor any hope for reconciliation in such ill-considered, unwarranted and unjust remarks," Mr. de Klerk said.

He added that this was the third time he had to endure "such unwarranted and malicious assaults arising from the truth commission's activities."

Mr. de Klerk, who ruled South Africa from November 1989 until April 1994 — when the country's first democratic elections brought Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to power — also lashed out at the media, and public SABC radio in particular, for rounding on him.

"The SABC has been particularly vitriolic and unfair in its relentless campaign to vilify me," he said.

Mr. de Klerk returned to the public spotlight in recent weeks after his former police minister, Adriaan Vlok, claimed he and his cabinet had been aware of illegal activities carried out by the security forces.

Mr. Vlok mentioned in particular a number of bombings against civilian targets he sanctioned as law and order minister in the early 1980s.

Mr. Vlok's revelations in an application to the TRC for amnesty appeared to contradict Mr. de Klerk's two submissions to the TRC in August 1996 and May 1997.

Mr. de Klerk declared then that he had never been aware of any illegal activities carried out by members of his government.

However, Mr. Vlok said he had made Mr. de Klerk and his cabinet colleagues aware as early as 1993 that he had been involved in illegal activity and intended to seek indemnity.

Explaining the apparent contradiction, Mr. de Klerk said in his statement Sunday he had not viewed the bombings of the buildings as gross human rights violations as no one had been killed.

"What I do deny is that I was involved in, or at the time informed of, the deci-

sion to bomb the buildings. Neither Mr. Vlok nor (former police commissioner) General Johan van der Merwe has to my knowledge made any such allegation."

He said had he been aware of any such decision, he would, as a member of the South African cabinet at the time, have "strenuously opposed it because... it was not only illegal but unacceptable and counterproductive as well."

In fact, he added, both Mr. Vlok and Mr. Van der Merwe had stated he was provided with this information only towards the end of his presidency.

In his submission to the TRC last year, Mr. de Klerk said he did not deny his government had been involved in covert operations, but said to his knowledge these did not include authorising of murder, torture, assassination, rape or assault.

He repeated Sunday that neither he, nor the great majority of his cabinet colleagues, "were involved in, or aware of, the gross violations of human rights committed by some of the former security forces."

Mr. de Klerk attacked the TRC as being "almost entirely one-sided" against the apartheid authorities and security forces.

## Colombo says sees no India role in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said Sunday she did not agree with local Tamil parties that Indian mediation was required to end the country's ethnic war.

"I don't agree with that view and I don't think India will accede from what we have discussed with India," Ms. Kumaratunga told Reuters in an interview.

"For the last several years India has followed a policy of leaving Sri Lanka to settle its own internal problems. We appreciate that stand. I don't think India can interfere in our internal problems," she said.

Parties representing Sri Lanka's Tamil minority said Saturday they had called upon India to once again intervene and mediate to find a solution to the 15-year-old ethnic war that has claimed thousands of lives.

The latest request came at a meeting between Tamil party representatives and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in Colombo last Thursday.

Mr. Vajpayee was in

Colombo to attend the three-day summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Ms. Kumaratunga said Mr. Vajpayee had not raised the ethnic war or issues concerning the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels during their bilateral meeting in Colombo last week.

The Tamil Tigers have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's north and east since 1983.

India sent its troops to Sri Lanka in the late 1980s to implement a peace accord that it had brokered, but later withdrew them in 1990 after they became embroiled in a bitter struggle with the rebels.

"Mr. Vajpayee did not raise the issue. But I always keep the leaders of the region informed of the present situation of the war and the peace proposals," Ms. Kumaratunga said.

Ms. Kumaratunga earlier told India's Hindu newspaper in an interview that her country had a good political relation-

ship with the new Indian government.

"We have very good political relationships with the Indian government. We do not interfere with India's internal problems and India does not interfere with ours," she said in the interview published Sunday.

She said Sri Lanka needed to have no apprehensions as long as the policy adopted by the previous Indian governments of leaving Sri Lanka to solve its own internal problems continued.

A fledgling coalition government led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took power earlier this year in New Delhi after inconclusive elections.

"At the moment, the Indian governments have followed a consistent policy of respecting Sri Lanka's sovereignty and its independence in taking decisions," Ms. Kumaratunga told the newspaper.

"As long as that remains, there should be no problem at all."

## Motorist says he may have caused Diana's death

LONDON (R) — A French former marine was quoted Sunday as saying his high-speed driving might have been a major factor in the car crash which killed Princess Diana last year.

Francis Levisre, 54, told Britain's Sunday People newspaper: "Thinking about it carefully, I now understand how I could have helped cause the crash."

"I was close behind the car, as much as 10 metres, and my driving may have caused it to swerve and lose control," Mr. Levisre, a truck driver by profession, said he was speeding in a dark grey Ford Ka through the Paris underpass last August where the Princess's car crashed.

His comments came in an interview with investigators working for journalist Nicholas Farrell who is writing a book on the crash, the newspaper said.

But Mr. Farrell said: "In no way can it be suggested that Levisre was responsible totally for the crash... He was simply the catalyst to a terrible sequence of events."

The People said Mr. Levisre was interviewed by police investigators after the crash and acknowledged he had witnessed the accident but denied any involvement.

Also killed in the crash were Diana's millionaire companion Dodi Fayed and chauffeur Henri Paul, who was found afterwards to have been drunk.

## Argentine museum rents dinosaur fossils to Japan

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — A small Argentine palaeontology museum is renting sets of dinosaur fossils to two Japanese museums for fundraising purposes, a wire service here reported.

The Museum of Palaeontology at the National University of Comahue (UNC) is making a \$14,000 profit on the deal, the private wire service Notemas Argentina reported Saturday.

Museum director Jorge Calvo said the money would be used for museum repairs and to fund new expeditions.

The fossils were rented to the National Museum of Natural Science in Tokyo and the Municipal Museum of Science in the city of Nagoya, Mr. Calvo said.

Scores of dinosaur fossils have been found in recent years in the Andean state of Neuquen, located some 1040 kilometres south-east of Buenos Aires.

Mr. Calvo made the announcement upon returning from a trip to Japan, where he gave talks on the dinosaur fossils found in Neuquen state.

## Gonzalez to defend ex-minister in case appeal

MADRID (AFP) — Spain's former Premier Felipe Gonzalez will defend his former Interior Minister Jose Barrionuevo, jailed last week for links to death squads hunting armed Basque separatists, El Pais reported Sunday.

The former Socialist premier will don his lawyer's robes again to represent Mr. Barrionuevo and his one-time deputy, Rafael Vera, in an appeal before the Constitutional Court against their 10-year sentences.

"The judgement will end up being annulled, and so the truth will in the end come out, from a legal point of view," Mr. Gonzalez told El Pais.

Mr. Barrionuevo and Mr. Vera were among 12 defendants convicted last Wednesday of involvement in the 1983-1987 "Dirty War" in Spain in which 28 people linked to the Basque separatist organisation ETA were murdered by GAL death squads, known as the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups (GAL).

Six of the defendants including Mr. Barrionuevo and Mr. Vera, were found guilty of illegal detention and embezzlement of public funds in the 1983 kidnapping of Spanish-born French businessman Segundo Marey, the first action claimed by the GAL.

Five others, all but one of them ex-police officers, were found guilty of illegal detention with a twist, also an ex-police officer, found guilty of complicity in the detention.

Sentences for the dozen

defendants ranged from two years and four months to 10 years in prison.

Mr. Gonzalez himself was absolved in November 1996 of any responsibility in Spain's "Dirty War" against the Basque separatists, but one of those convicted last week claimed during his own trial that the former premier had been instrumental in setting up the death squads.

The 1994 exposure of the GAL scandal helped bring down the socialist government in Spain's 1996 elections.

During this latest trial however, one defendant, Ricardo Garcia Damborenea, a former Socialist leader in the Basque province of Biscay, charged that Mr. Gonzalez "agreed in the idea of catching terrorists in the south of France."

Mr. Damborenea received a seven-year sentence for illegal detention.

El Pais said that Friday Mr. Gonzalez, who took his law degree in 1964, went to the Madrid college of advocates to register once more as a lawyer, the career he abandoned in the mid-1970s for a political career.

The paper said Mr. Gonzalez intended to participate in the entire appeals procedure, from the Constitutional Court right up to the European Court of Human Rights, in Strasbourg if necessary.

And he accused his successor as Premier, the conservative Jose Maria Aznar, of basing his politics on the "destruction and elimination" of his adversaries.



U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen (left) and U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hubbard (right) arrive at Manila airport (AP)

## U.S. defense stirs temp

MANILA — U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen and U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hubbard arrived Sunday at Manila airport (AP)

Mr. Cohen, who is on a two-day visit to the Philippines, said he was pleased to see the progress of the peace process in Mindanao.

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U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen (left) accompanied by Philippine Air Force deputy commander Major General Alfonso de los Santos (right) and U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hubbard (centre) review the line of military honour guards upon arrival at Manila airport (AFP photo)

## U.S. defence chief's visit stirs tempest in Manila

MANILA (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen flew to the Philippines Sunday for security talks, reviving an old controversy that had dogged relations between the United States and its former colony.

At the top of Mr. Cohen's agenda is an unratified agreement between the Manila and Washington governments that would pave the way for the return of U.S. forces, though just for exercises, six years after Filipinos forced them to leave the country.

In an ironic turn, the two top Philippine officials Mr. Cohen is counting on to make the agreement effective — new President Joseph Estrada and defence chief Orlando Mercado — helped lead the campaign to oust U.S. troops from the country in 1992.

Mr. Estrada and Mr. Mercado have modified their stand and pledged to campaign for ratification of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) by the Philippine Senate, which is needed to put it into force.

Mr. Cohen gave no statement when he arrived in Manila from a visit to Indonesia. U.S. officials earlier said he would discuss greater U.S. military access to the Philippines in his talks in Manila.

He is to meet Mr. Estrada and Mr. Mercado separately

Monday.

Mr. Cohen's visit blew new force into an old tempest over the U.S. military role in the Philippines.

Church and leftist groups vowed to hold street protests during Mr. Cohen's three-day visit. They vehemently oppose the accord, calling it a surrender of Philippine sovereignty.

Communist rebels last week declared that they might take armed action against visiting U.S. soldiers if Manila ratified the agreement.

The accord deals with treatment of U.S. soldiers taking part in military exercises between the two countries, which have been suspended for the past two years.

One of the provisions which incensed nationalist groups would give the U.S. military the right to decide if an American soldier who commits a crime is on duty, which would mean he cannot be prosecuted by a local court.

Mr. Estrada and Mr. Mercado belonged to a nationalist bloc in the Senate which in 1991 rejected a new bases treaty with Washington, forcing the closure of Subic naval base in 1992 and ending nearly a century of U.S. military presence in the Philippines.

Mr. Estrada defended his decision to support the VFA.

"As your president, I have the moral right to stand up for Philippine security today," Mr. Estrada told the Philippines Congress last week.

Mr. Mercado said ratification was vital for national security because the country had no money to modernise its military.

"It is critical for us to review our strategic plans so we would not be caught flat-footed," he told reporters.

The previous government of Fidel Ramos approved a \$2 billion programme to modernise the ill-equipped armed forces but Mr. Estrada suspended it, saying Mr. Ramos had left him with an empty Treasury.

The Philippine Journal newspaper predicted rough sailing for the VFA.

"Undoubtedly, the agreement is expected to generate acrimonious debate, specially over provisions granting immunity to American troops," it said in an editorial Sunday.

"Sovereignty... seems to have suffered a steep devaluation alongside the peso," political analyst Renato Constantino wrote in the Manila Bulletin, referring to the country's weakened currency.

## Cambodia's election results still in limbo a week after voting

PREK HO, Cambodia (AP) — Cambodia's National Election Committee Sunday fled observers and other participants in last week's polls, but made no progress in delivering a final vote tally or resolving complaints about election fraud.

The country's currency, however, continued strengthening in an apparent indicator of public confidence that the country is heading towards political stability after last Sunday's general election.

Shopkeepers Sunday morning were quoting an exchange rate of 3,100 riels to the U.S. dollar compared to a short-term low of about 4,300 just before the election.

A cultural show was held at the home just outside the capital of committee chairman Chheng Phon "to thank the foreign and national observers who have contributed so much to the success of the Cambodian elections."

Representatives from the United Nations, the European Union, and foreign diplomats — whose countries provided over \$34 million in assistance for the elections — joined international observers in the morning's ceremony of thanks.

Most of the groups representing 700 international election observers certified the polls as free and fair enough to be considered legitimate even though no final results have yet been issued.

"I have the feeling and hope that a new chapter was opened in the book of Cambodia's long history," said Sven Linder, the chief observer for

the European Union, which donated over \$11.5 million.

The elections were held one year after Cambodian leader Hun Sen ousted Prince Norodom Ranariddh as his co-premier in a violent coup, shattering a tense dual premiership formed after U.N.-sponsored elections in 1993.

Prince Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC party is the main opposition grouping.

"A year ago we weren't sure we would make it to elections, let alone free and fair elections," said Gordon Longmuir, Canada's ambassador, adding that he was "proud" his country had been able to participate in the process.

The National Election Committee Sunday released preliminary official results for just seven of 23 constituencies but said that the final tally would be delayed because the figures from various communes and provinces were being rechecked.

There are 122 parliamentary seats at stake, and from unofficial projections it appears that Hun Sen's ruling Cambodian People's Party will win a majority of them.

The opposition parties, who have alleged election fraud, have asked for a recount in areas where they suspect irregularities.

A statement from an independent Cambodian poll watching body, the Neutral and Impartial Committee for Free Elections in Cambodia listed several otherwise unpublicised incidents of manipulation and fraud.

The group, affiliated with

the human rights organisation LICADHO, noted three violent election day incidents in the central province of Kampong Cham, one of the most heavily contested areas.

In two districts, the group said in a statement issued Saturday, it appeared that people firing shots in the air discouraged others from voting, and in a third district a woman was shot dead early in the day.

"Initial reports indicate that voters were severely intimidated" by the shooting, it said.

The group reported its observers had witnessed at least one case of fraud in the southern province of Kampot, where the chief of one polling station was seen inserting ballots into the ballot box after voting had closed.

In a counting station in Kampot, an official misread ballots in favour of one party although the ballots were marked for another party, it said.

Benny Widjono, an observer representing Indonesia, said that the international community had done its job by ensuring that the polls were violence-free and that Cambodia would have to iron out problems that have since surfaced.

"We cannot micro-manage the problems of every country," said Mr. Widjono, formerly the U.N. secretary general's representative in Cambodia.

Co-Prime Minister Hun Sen meanwhile responded to another concern Saturday, calling on his security forces not to terrorise members of the opposition in acts of political revenge.

## U.N. team leaves Kabul empty-handed after aid talks fail

KABUL (AFP) — A United Nations delegation Sunday quit the Afghan capital, conceding the failure of talks with the hard-line Taleban militia aimed at securing the return of expelled foreign aid groups.

U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Afghanistan Bronek Szyzalski said he had to leave Kabul with "disappointment" as the strict Muslim Taleban authorities left no avenue open for the return of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

"We unfortunately were not given too much of an option to discuss the alternatives for the NGOs' eventual return. It was very disappointing for us," Mr. Szyzalski told journalists.

Foreign NGOs, who supply the bulk of humanitarian

assistance to Kabul, were expelled from the capital when they refused to accept an order forcing them to relocate to a dilapidated compound.

Now only the U.N. and the International Red Cross remain in Kabul.

"We wanted to tackle the issue of NGOs' relocation. Since that issue could not be tackled in discussions yesterday (Saturday), we felt that we are not making any progress," Mr. Szyzalski explained.

He also described how the religious militia had explained their concerns over the presence of around 20 aid groups in the capital to the five-member U.N.-led delegation.

"Mostly we were faced with a set of statements on the problems that the NGOs cause in this country

which is obviously an issue of concern for the Taleban," he noted.

However Mr. Szyzalski admitted the cumbersome U.N. could not work without smaller aid groups in the capital, warning of "terrible consequences on the population of Kabul."

Saying the Taleban were "tough negotiators", Mr. Szyzalski hoped that the talks could resume soon in view of comments made by the Taleban's Planning Minister and chief negotiator Qari Din Mohammad, in which he said he "hoped for a solution of the crisis."

However the Taleban's planning minister placed the blame for the talks' breakdown squarely on the visiting team, saying they had left to attend "emergency business outside the country."

Conceding current deadlock between the two sides, Mr. Szyzalski said he believed negotiations would take time.

"Experience has shown us that talking with the Taleban requires more patience," he noted.

The crisis is the culmination of two years of tight restrictions on aid delivery following the Taleban takeover of the city, where agency activities have come under increasing pressure from the militia.

Most foreign aid workers say they have no doubt the relocation ultimatum was little more than an indirect expulsion order, aimed at a community highly critical of the Muslim militia's policies banning work and education for women and restricting female access to health care.

Large areas of Kabul have already felt the impact of the pull-out, with tens of thousands of residents without running water and medical facilities facing shortages of medicines.

For their part, the U.N. secured a continued presence in the Taleban-held two-thirds of Afghanistan by signing a controversial deal with the purist Muslim movement.

The agreement concedes that female access to health and education will "need to be gradual," and allows the militia to have a say in the employment of local staff.

The agreement drew a storm of criticism from human rights groups which accused the U.N. of abandoning the principle of the universality of gender rights.

## Taleban army takes key northern town

KABUL (AP) — Afghanistan's Taleban fighters captured the stronghold of warlord Gen. Rashid Dostum Sunday, Taleban and opposition sources said, putting the religious militia on the doorstep of the main headquarters of the opposition coalition.

Spokesman Abdul Hay Muttamayan, speaking by telephone from Taleban headquarters in the southern city of Kandahar, had few details on the battle for Sheberghan. A day earlier, Taleban officials claimed to be just 100 kilometres across flat desert from the town where Gen. Dostum had assembled an arsenal of tanks, fighter jets and other equipment.

Azizullah Shasaq, a spokesman for the Hezb-e Wahadat militia, one of Gen. Dostum's partners, confirmed Sheberghan had fallen. Mr. Shasaq said Gen. Dostum had retreated south to the nearby town of Sarin and reported by satellite phone late Sunday that he had suffered few casualties and that fighting continued.

Mullah Omar, another Taleban spokesman, said his fighters had captured many opposition soldiers, but he had no figures. The next Taleban target is likely to be the key city of Mazar-i-

Sharif, about 100 kilometres east of Sheberghan. Mullah Omar said Taleban fighters were already making gains around Mazar-i-Sharif.

Mr. Shasaq said Mazar-i-Sharif was calm. Taleban fighters had briefly held Mazar-i-Sharif last May, but retreated after street battles, mostly with Hezb-i-Wahadat fighters, that left several hundred of Taleban fighters dead.

It is believed that as many as 2,000 Taleban soldiers who were taken prisoner in that fighting were later massacred. Taleban officials have reported advances in recent days through neighbouring Faryab, a remote province from where independent reports have been unavailable.

Fighting has been fierce in Faryab since early July, with both sides claiming the upper hand as the anti-Taleban coalition struggles to hold onto its last shreds of territory.

The Taleban religious militia, which rules in most of Afghanistan, has imposed a strict version of Islamic law in territory it controls. The anti-Taleban coalition is mostly made up of Afghanistan's minority ethnic and religious groups, factions that sometimes fight each other as well as the Taleban army.

## New Japanese premier struggling to convince voters

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's new Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi has run into immediate public disapproval over blunders by ministers in his first days in office, according to surveys published Sunday.

Only one third of Japanese voters support Mr. Obuchi, who took over from Ryutaro Hashimoto last Thursday to take on the battle to save the economy and debt-ridden financial system, the surveys showed.

More than half of those polled disapproved of Mr. Obuchi's government and about 70 per cent did not believe it would pull the world's second-biggest economy out of recession.

Mr. Obuchi huddled with his aides Sunday, preparing for a policy speech which he is to deliver next Friday, presumably focusing on permanent income and corporate tax cuts worth more than six trillion yen (\$42 billion).

"I am still studying," the 61-year-old premier told reporters after the afternoon session when asked what he would tell the people.

The weekend polls by the mass-circulation Yomiuri newspaper and the TV Asahi network — although covering limited random samples of 1,000 each — may have a far-reaching impact on the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) which faces growing pressure for early general elections.

"We cannot afford any time to spare for elections now,"

chief cabinet secretary Hiromu Nonaka said in a television talk show Sunday.

"The ruling and opposition parties should work together to tide over the national crisis. I think it is the responsibility of politicians,"

Mr. Hashimoto stepped down after an upper house electoral disaster blamed on his reluctant promises of tax cuts and other belated economic stimulus measures.

Mr. Obuchi had problems with some ministers almost immediately after his election as premier.

Agriculture Minister Shoichi Nakagawa, 45, said Friday he had doubts about the existence of "comfort women" sex slaves forced by the Japanese Imperial Army to serve frontline soldiers during World War II.

He subsequently retracted the comment which agitated party leaders and sparked media protests in South Korea where most of the women came from.

Kenji Manabe, 63, the state minister for environmental affairs, then told reporters that nuclear power was not a source of "clean energy," running against the official state view.

Finally, Posts and Telecommunications Minister Seiko Noda criticised the purchase of shares with postal savings funds to bolster Japanese stock markets.

"I do not want to see it done while I am in office," said Ms. Noda, 37, the only woman in the cabinet, fuelling worries of a possible market reaction.

Mr. Obuchi's "economic revival cabinet" had already made a shaky start after comments by 78-year-old Finance Minister Kiuchi Miyazawa, a former premier, who helped draft bills to rescue the finance sector, and a popular economist Taichi Sakaiya.

Mr. Miyazawa sent the yen falling against the dollar Friday, the morning after his appointment as finance minister, when he expressed caution toward intervention in foreign exchange markets.

Mr. Sakaiya, the state minister for economic planning, was bold enough to call for a downward revision of the government's economic growth target of 1.9 per cent for the year to next March.

The premier got an approval rating of 33.1 per cent against a disapproval rate of 52.0 per cent in the Yomiuri newspaper poll of 936 voters.

Only 11.9 per cent believed the Obuchi government can deliver on its pledge to refloat the economy.

TV Asahi network said only 29.2 per cent of 1,000 viewers it polled approved the new government and 55.2 per cent were against. Only 12 per cent were convinced by economic measures to be taken by Mr. Obuchi.

The poll showed that 660 would vote for Naoto Kan, head of the main opposition Democratic Party, if rules were changed to allow the election of a premier by popular vote. Mr. Obuchi had support from only 146.

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E-Mail: rams@go.com.jo بريد الكتروني







## Pella region tombs survey documents hundreds of mysterious ancient megalithic structures

THIS YEAR'S second full field season of the Pella Hinterland Tomb Project, an extensive walking survey in a small forested area of north-west Jordan, has resulted in the identification of a substantial collection of ancient megalithic tomb structures, including some that are known nowhere else in the world. Among the most mysterious and fascinating monuments to reach us from our ancient ancestors, these tombs include dolmens, megalithic tombs, cairns or tumuli, rubble tombs, standing stone monuments, or menhirs, caves, and other such remains. Most of them are not well dated, which only adds to the allure of their mystery.

The 1998 Pella Hinterland Tomb Survey was conducted by six archaeologists directed by Ms. Fiona Baker, a British national and Ph.D. candidate at Durham University in the United Kingdom. Her interest in the rich tomb fields around the Pella region was sparked by her participation in the wider Pella Hinterland Survey Project of 1994-1996 that has been directed by Dr. Pamela Watson and Dr. Margaret O'Hea.

In 1996 Baker first intensively documented two tombfields that had been discovered in 1995, and this year her team surveyed a 1.2-square-kilometre region around the Juffayn Forest, located north-east of Pella. The Pella Hinterland Tomb Project aims to create a rigorously tested typology for the tombs of the region that could be applicable to the broader Levant region.

The 1998 survey recorded a total of 465 archaeological sites. These included:

- 160 dolmens, structures made of large cut stones usually comprising two, three or four upright stones covered by one horizontal stone;
- 52 kerbed cairns; these appear like sprawling mounds or spreads of stone rubble within which are kerbed chambers, or rings of roughly circular or oval shaped stones filled with rubble;
- 23 megalithic corbelled tombs; these are tombs made of large megalithic stones that are corbelled, that is every ascending course of stone projects slightly inwards, ultimately achieving a domed effect; the megalithic stones are smaller in size than the megaliths used to make dolmens;
- 14 megalithic tombs; 4 chambered cairns; 36 standing stones/megaliths; 34 caves or possible cave tombs; 112 walls; 3 wine

presses; 6 rock-cut basins; and 18 other sites such as cisterns, quarries, pottery sherd scatters, and one modern gun emplacement.

The date of most of the tombs remains unknown. Excavated dolmens in other parts of Jordan, such as Damiyeh, generally date from the Early Bronze Age I (c. 3300-3000 B.C.), while excavated dolmens and megalithic tombs in the Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan Heights date from the Early Bronze Age IV or the Early Bronze-Middle Bronze transition period (c. 2300-1900 B.C.).

The large multi-chambered rubble cairns around Pella are not documented anywhere else in the Levant, and none have been excavated to date, so their date cannot yet be determined (they probably do exist elsewhere, but simply have not been recognised as tombs to date, given that to

the casual eye they look like a haphazard scatter of stones suggesting field clearance, although on closer inspection individual chambers and kerbs can be determined. Some of the best preserved examples stand as high as 7 metres and measure c. 20 x 15 metres). Surface pottery collected at one multi-chambered cairn dated from the EBIV period, though the only similar structure so far known that Baker had visited in the southern Jordan Valley had much earlier Chalcolithic pottery (c. 4500-3300 B.C.) associated with it.

The wealth, variety, and good state of preservation of most of the recorded tombs "offers an exceptional opportunity to investigate the relationships between the different tomb types in both chronological and social terms," Baker said in a recent interview in

Amman.

One of the key issues to be determined is whether these different types of burials were used simultaneously by a single cultural group or several different peoples who co-existed in the region, or rather represent cemeteries that were used hundreds or thousands of years apart by very different civilisations. The tradition of dolmen building may have endured for centuries, or over a millennium, during the 4th-3rd millennia.

One of the most intriguing dimensions of the dolmens is their location and possible relationships to routes used by transhumant people, for scholars widely assume that dolmens were the burials of nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples; but this assumption is not iron-clad, as some dolmens in the north and south Jordan Valley regions are located

near settled villages and towns.

Most dolmens at Juffayn are oriented northwest-to-southeast, looking towards the upper Jordan Valley and Lake Tiberias. Most but not all are built on relatively poor land that is not appropriate for cultivation; are rectangular in shape; are blocked with slabs at both ends; have platforms that result in a semi-concealed subterranean chamber; are usually clustered in groups that in turn are sometimes enclosed; and are usually located above 300 metres above sea level (asl) in the north of Jordan (in the south of Jordan the dolmens occur at lower levels).

The fact that few dolmens are found below around 300 asl "may represent a cultural boundary of some kind," Baker said.

The presence of different tomb types together indicates that no type was considered exclusive, she suggests. "If different people built different types of tombs there was not animosity or a cultural divide that prevented the dead from being buried together," she adds, emphasising that only future excavations can answer who built these tombs, when they were built, and what are the relationships, if any, among the different kinds of burials documented.

The different construction methods and types that characterise the Juffayn dolmens hold out the promise of determining the history of the cemetery's use. Equally important, and rare, is the presence within the same burial ground of megalithic corbelled tombs, kerbed cairns, and large tiered cairns, some of which may be multi-cham-

bered. Future excavations could clarify if any relationships existed among these different kinds of tombs.

Cairns (or rijms) and tumuli burials often appear like a pile of stones sticking up slightly above ground level, and most seem to date from the millennia between the Early Bronze Age and the Iron Age (4th-through-1st Millennium B.C.). Some filled cairns in southern Palestine seem to have been used for mortuary cults rather than for burials, and this may be the case here as well.

One particularly significant tomb documented this year was a circular cairn with five layers of stepped or tiered kerbs and perhaps more than one burial chamber, located on the summit of a hill and giving it the appearance of a tower, Baker said. Two particularly large rubble cairns identified this year measured 14x9 and around 12x10 metres, one of which stood a metre high.

Free-standing megalithic stones, or menhirs, were identified in the survey area. Some probably represented unused megaliths for dolmens, while others were clearly set upright as menhirs, probably burial markers of some sort. Baker hopes that plotting all the sites in the survey area will clarify any possible relationships between the menhirs and sightlines between burial monuments and the surrounding landscape.

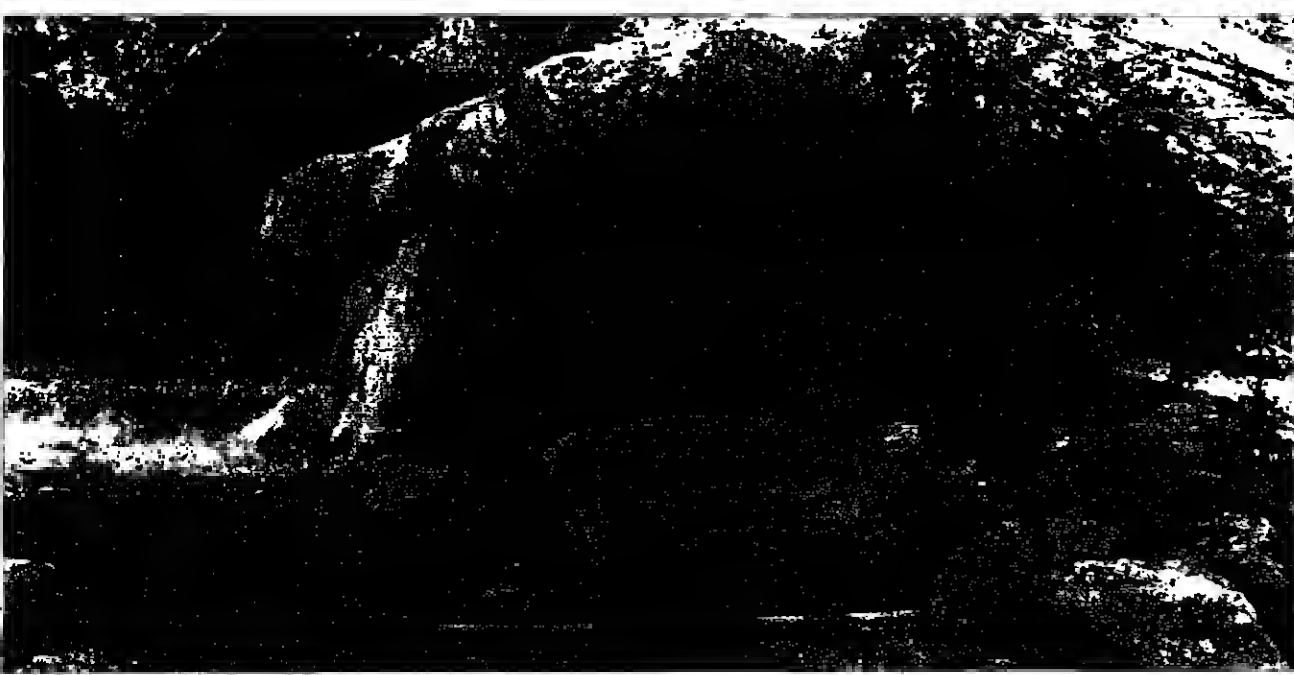
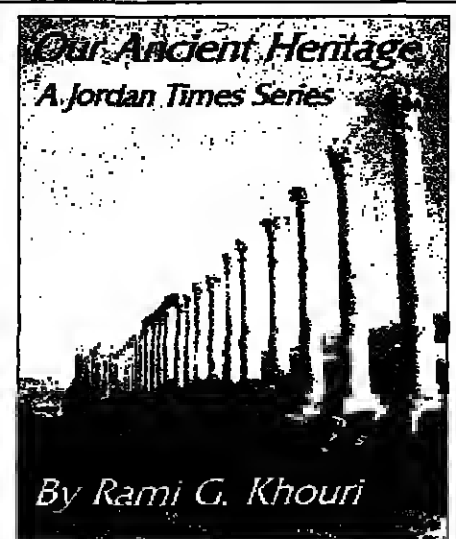
In one part of the survey area the team identified a line of six standing men-

hirs along the edge of a spur of land, which Baker interprets as a boundary line that may have demarcated an adjacent dolmen cemetery.

Most of the caves were filled with earth and thus their original use could not be determined without excavations. The many ancient walls in the survey area were mostly made of a single course of large limestone boulders, and most were probably boundary or field walls. Some ancient terracing was identified, along with two clear enclosures that may have been associated with dolmen fields.

Baker hopes to excavate some of the tombs in the year 2000, focusing on establishing a chronological relationship among the three main types of tombs at Juffayn — dolmens, megalithic corbelled tombs, and kerbed cairns.

The 1998 survey team comprised Fiona Baker, Ruth Ward, Paul Sharmar, Rosey Burton, Frank Marun, and Department of Antiquities representative Yousha el-Amri. The project has been conducted with the cooperation of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, and has been funded to date by the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, the Palestine Exploration Fund, the Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, and Westburn Publishers Ltd.



One of the many dolmens documented in the Pella Hinterland Tomb Project (photo courtesy of Fiona Baker)

## Draft report on water investigations confirms 'dangerous' substances in water supply from Lake Tiberias

Following is the translated text of a draft report by the Lower House Agriculture and Water Committee on the findings of the Royal Scientific Society in its investigation of the water pollution problem plaguing the Amman municipality. The draft report was made available to Al-Dustour daily.

HAVING STUDIED the RSS's report on the testing of samples of water received from Zai water station and after examining the results of tests on water samples going into the station or coming out of it, the Agriculture and Water Committee held a meeting on Saturday, August 1, 1998 to discuss the results.

The committee studied the results of the tests conducted at the RSS laboratories between July 16 and 21, 1998 and is pleased to submit to the Lower House of Parliament its second report on this topic. The committee emphasises that this second report supports the contents of its previous report which provided indisputable proof of the cause of the problem.

The findings of this second report are as follows:

The committee has studied the RSS report and the reports of specialists on the quality and the source of water coming from Daganya and which proved the presence of huge quantities of algae as was proven in the RSS's report based on tests conducted on July 16, 1998 (Table I).

In comparing the amounts of algae found in this water with those coming from the Wadi Arab and Yarmouk waters the committee has concluded beyond any shred of doubt that the huge amounts of organic substances were the root cause of the problem which prevented the station from conducting normal operations. The additional amounts of water which entered the station after operating the pumps in a ceremony held earlier this year have indeed further complicated the problem.

### Remarks

The numbers represent the amounts of algae for every three litres of water.

The figures from water samples taken from Daganya were at the rate of one-cubic centimetre each. Based on this ratio we have unified the final figures for all the sources so as to make it easier for comparison. The committee has studied the statements

and remarks of the minister of water and irrigation on television when he attributed the problem to an operational error saying that he has formed a committee to conduct an investigation to determine those responsible for the problem.

The Agriculture and Water Committee would like to point out that had the error been due to an operational fault it could have occurred during an eight-hour shift and could have been dealt with by the employees on the subsequent shift, and the problem would have ended there. But the committee has found that the situation is totally different and that the problem has persisted on a very long period of time and that the water analysis is showing that larvae and worms were present in the water that came from the Zai station on July 29, 1998. Hence this was not an operational error but a continuing error which is yet to be corrected. The causes are of a different nature.

The committee would like to draw Parliament's attention to reports by specialists on the source of Daganya water issued July 1998 (Interim report) concerning "transportation system project" chapter 4 page 9 in Table V. This report contains figures that shed light on the nature of the Daganya water, and we believe that the table provides extremely dangerous figures, especially the figures referred to as (COD=23 PPM, COLI=1600, Fecal=1600, and a high level of bromide of 3.4 ppm).

This data leaves no doubt that the water quality is very close in characteristics to sewage water. Page 9, paragraph 2 of the RSS report states that "living organisms were found in the Daganya water." At the same time the committee draws attention to the fact that the minister of water and the water authority secretary general have been careful not to mention anything related to the quality of the water at its source in any way.

The same report together with the attached photocopy on page 15, paragraph 3 states, "The Lake Tiberias water which is saturated with bromide and which is being supplied through the Daganya pipelines should not be mixed with surface water but only with ground water."

This means that any of the Daganya drinking water should not be mixed with the King Abdullah Canal water.

The committee studied a report from the World Health Organisation

Table I  
The quantity of algae in water samples taken from different sources on July 16, 1998 as contained in the RSS table:

Source	green algae	greenish blue algae	total
Wadi al Arab	32	3	35
Yarmouk	110	-	110
Daganya	204,400	27,000	231,000

(WHO) specialists on the question of water which notes that: if there were an alternative source to the polluted water then this polluted water should not be used, but if there is no alternative then it becomes necessary to take the choice of doing without this water or to accept the treated water with all its foul odour and taste. It is not normal to see huge amounts of algae present in the water used for drinking purposes. The RSS report recommends that the concerned authorities always have an alternate emergency plan when need arises and in emergencies like human error or failure of the purification stations or water distribution networks. The water should always be under strict control.

Based on this report the committee calls for convening a specialised scientific team from this country with expertise in this particular subject to discuss the situation and provide a final decision and we call for doing without the Daganya water for this year and putting our house in order for the next year.

The committee believes that the situation is very serious because of the continued presence of larvae that cause sickness and we call for the closure of the water gate that brings water through Daganya until the specialists have reached a final decision independent of any influence from the minister of water and the secretary general of the Water Authority.

The committee has noted from tables of the results of the RSS's laboratory tests that the water still contained worms as of July 21, and the committee has learnt that worms were still found in the drinking water until July 29.

The committee stresses that it searched for the causes of the problem and sought to prevent its recurrence, and it sought to determine whether the water was fit for consumption. To form any conclusions it found that the following questions

must be answered and the following tests conducted:

a. The rate of methane concentrations. TRI Halo Methane, in water at the following locations 1) the Zai clear water 2) Dahouk water tower and the distribution towers, 3) the households tanks.

The committee believes that these substances are a source of danger to public health and there is a need to know about their concentration in the water because such concentration continually increases. It also believes that the presence of chlorine and organic substances during hot seasons aggravates the situation.

b. The results of the following tests: chemical oxygen demand (COD), biological oxygen demand (BOD) and total organic carbon (TOC).

c. The results of tests on bacteria and viruses in the past eight weeks.

The committee reasserts the need for a neutral laboratory which can receive samples of water, and test them chemically and biologically at intervals. Such a laboratory should serve as a reference in order to be certain of results. This matter should not be left solely to the Water Authority which has lost credibility.

The Parliament Committee on Health and the Environment has the authority to supervise the laboratory tests.

In revising the tables and the figures, the committee has noticed that the report on the raw water at Zai did not mention whether the larvae counted were dead or alive. We believe that the report considered them to be dead because it only mentioned the presence of one living larva by July 19.

If this is so there is need for thorough study to find the causes that led to the worms' death. Since the worms are dead we believe that the chemical substances found in the water caused their demise. Here we would like to

know what chemicals caused the worms' death before they entered the purification station.

The committee has learnt that ClO<sub>2</sub> has been used instead of chlorine. If this is so then this substance tends to reduce the methane compound in the drinking water. This also means that a problem exists, and the committee insists on learning about the rate of methane concentration THM. The committee also draws attention to the fact that the use of this substance carries the risk of the formation of chemical substances like ClO<sub>2</sub> and ClO<sub>3</sub> in the treated water. These are poisonous and dangerous substances.

The committee emphasises that the method of drawing the Yarmouk and Mukhaiba waters is unsafe and wrong. This is because the water originates from surface and running water which becomes polluted during its course before it undergoes purification and treatment at the station through the use of chemical substances.

The committee believes that drawing water through pipes to the Deir Alla station is in the long run less costly than the treatment processes which are conducted at present at the station to rid the water of pollutants.

In light of the RSS report about the water resources which is void of any mention of the quality of the water at source, the only strategic and safe option for this country's future lies in drawing the Yarmouk and the Mukhaiba waters through a pipeline to Deir Alla. This project should be given priority overall the other national projects and should under no circumstances be delayed. The Daganya water can be used for irrigation.

The committee has learnt that there exists a study on drawing water from Yarmouk and Mukhaiba through a pipe to Deir Alla and that is to be financed from a European Union grant. But the minister of water and irrigation has rejected such a project for no given reason.

The committee believes that the Japanese government's grant on water should be directed towards building a pipeline from Yarmouk to Deir Alla and to the water station.

The committee calls for a national dialogue so as to prevent any tampering in the drinking water.

The committee finds it necessary for the concerned authorities and Parliament to re-examine the Kingdom's water policies and that national

experts should conduct studies and prepare related long-term plans.

The committee reminds the House of the remarks made by deputies about the water situation during debates in Parliament and their demands to the government for the restructuring of the Water Authority to allow a national firm to operate water services on a commercial basis. But the minister had insisted that the Water Authority was better qualified to manage such services.

We as an agriculture and water committee demand that all matters concerning the Amman water issue be reviewed and the committee requests that the House demand that the government immediately stop its water management in the Amman area.

The committee draws attention to remarks by the minister of water and irrigation during the debate on water with this committee. The minister said then that the algae from Yarmouk River is much greater than the algae coming from Tiberias. We do not want to comment on these remarks but would like to draw attention to the figures in Table I attached to this report.

The minister had referred to the pollution of the Zai-Amman water in 1987 as to have occurred due to an error in operations when the employees opened the gates of the King Talal Dam instead of the Wadi Al Arab Dam. The committee conducted a study into the matter and found that a report by British specialists who came to Jordan to study the water problem cited only a limited amount of the King Talal Dam water entered the King Abdullah Canal at the time causing the drinking water to have a foul odour and taste. History repeats itself in this matter.

The committee places its findings in the hands of the House and recommends the following:

— Halting the process of mixing Daganya water with the Yarmouk and Mukhaiba waters

— Conducting a national dialogue immediately to study all issues connected with water

— Demanding that the government dismiss the minister of water and irrigation as well as the secretary general of the Water Authority.

— When parliament starts its ordinary session, refer the minister to court for trial

— A revision of the water policies by trustworthy national experts.







## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Former minister of labour sees dependence on exporting and importing manpower at the same time as an effective way to contain unemployment

**\*\* ACCORDING TO** Saleh Khasawneh, the former minister of labour, a feature of the Jordanian labour market and one of the effective way to contain the unemployment is to depend on exporting and importing manpower at the same time. He indicated that Jordan has registered the highest rate in the world in this phenomenon which is characterised by exporting qualified and trained labour capable of earning high income while importing less qualified labour that gets paid less than the average prevailing wages in the market.

Dr. Khasawneh revealed that the size of the Jordanian labour outside has reached 30,000 workers. "In one of the years, the number of Jordanians residing outside has reached 2.2 million persons," he said.

The former minister highlighted the rate of exported labour to be 30 per cent of the size of the Jordanian labour market. At the same time, Dr. Khasawneh said, the rate of foreign labour in Jordan has reached 40 per cent of the labour force.

He pointed out that the highest number of work permits was recorded in 1997 when a total of 130,000 permits were issued compared to 1996 when the total number was 40,000. "The real number of the foreign labour that work without permits could total 400,000 workers and, according to some estimates, the number could be as high as 600,000 workers," Mr. Khasawneh said.

Lecturing at a Rotary Club meeting, he said that the "economic participation of both Jordanian and non-Jordanian labour represented 50 per cent of the gross (domestic) product in 1997." He stressed that the exported Jordanian labour is distinguished by its efficiency and training qualifications.

Dr. Khasawneh outlined the main reason for unemployment as being the slowdown in economic growth rates over a number of years. "This is due to the country's small size and weak capabilities and resources in addition to the change from one system to another such as privatisation and globalisation which have affected the size of the workforce and caused its contraction," he explained.

Another reason cited by Dr. Khasawneh for the unemployment was the increasing demand for administrative jobs. "The number of applications for employment submitted to the Civil Service Commission reached 150,000 each year whereas the number of applications submitted to the Ministry of Labour does not exceed 15,000 requests," the former minister concluded (Al Ra'i).

### Kuwait's airline plans shake-up ahead of privatisation

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait Airways Corp. (KAC) said Sunday it will raise fares, cancel unprofitable routes and lay off hundreds of employees before its full transformation into a public share holding company.

The chairman of Kuwait's state-owned national carrier, Ahmad Al Meshari, told AFP that a shake-up would be needed to prepare KAC for "operation in the commercial sector, subject to market forces of supply and demand."

"Privatisation can only be achieved through restructuring and cost cutting. Firstly, airfare prices, which are 35 per cent lower in Kuwait than other Gulf countries, will be raised," said Mr. Meshari. "Routes to Munich, Copenhagen, Athens, Tunis and Casablanca will be scrapped, and some 800 personnel will be laid off," he added, not specifying which sectors would be hit.

Mr. Meshari had earlier said that Kuwaiti personnel, who make up 65 per cent of KAC's workforce, would be the last to go. "It is premature to talk of the effect privatisation might have on customer service because we need time to evaluate our performance," he added.

The Kuwaiti cabinet approved in late June a draft law to transform KAC into a share holding company, but the legal process to prepare KAC for privatisation is expected to take up to nine months.

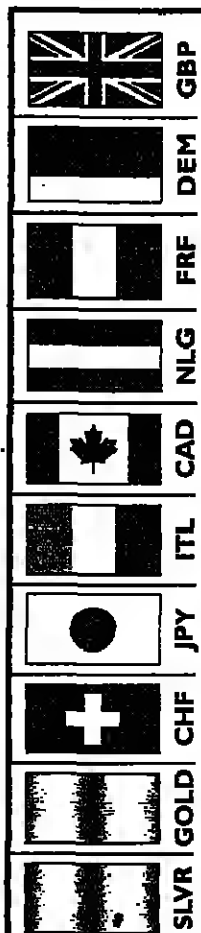
The law must first be accepted by the National Assembly, and it is not expected to be tabled in parliament until the end of October, after the summer recess.

Mr. Meshari said that the first step of privatisation would be the flotation of a 40 per cent stake, offered to the company's 5,370 employees, private individuals and the private sector.

The remaining 60 per cent stake would be sold by public subscription over a period of three to five years under the supervision of the state's Kuwait Investment Authority.

Mr. Meshari said the decision over whether or not to allow foreign airlines a stake in KAC was not in his hands, although he did not rule out the idea.

"It really depends on the state's economic policy [concerning foreign investment]. If the government allows it, it may happen, though it may take some time," he said.




### أسعار العملات العالمية مقابل الدولار الأمريكي وأسعار الذهب والفضة

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OBTAINED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 02/08/1998											
PAGE 12	MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW				SHARES	TRADED	JD	PRICE	PRICE		
S	355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	17.9	0.92	16	290	63310	219.00	218.50	-0.50-
	2.100	1.620	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	14	22784	37591	1.65	1.65	-
S	3.230	1.130	BANK OF JORDAN	2	0.00	5	1250	1425	1.14	1.14	-
	1.300	0.870	MID. EAST INV. BK.	67.0	0.00	8	4100	4194	1.05	1.02	-0.03-
S	2.680	1.530	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.9	6.65	6	17400	27144	1.57	1.56	-0.01-
S	6.550	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.5	3.22	37	14800	45707	3.12	3.09	-0.03-
	0.870	0.590	JOR. GULF BANK	5	0.00	7	27900	16740	0.60	0.60	-
S	4.000	1.690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.5	0.00	9	941	1617	1.72	1.71	-0.01-
	1.330	0.930	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	2	0.00	3	500	503	1.03	1.03	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 289.86		CHNG: -0.32		105		89965		198230	
I	2.770	1.610	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.8	8.93	11	7208	19831	2.71	2.80	+0.09+
S	2.630	1.200	JORDAN GULF INSUR.	9	0.00	1	250	368	1.40	1.47	+0.07+
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 130.15		CHNG: +0.72		12		7458		20199	
S	2.240	1.470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.1	5.32	19	11323	17446	1.54	1.55	+0.01+
	1.120	0.780	REAL ESTATE INV.	15.5	0.00	5	6500	5135	0.78	0.79	+0.01+
S	9.500	5.100	ALRAI	8.7	7.02	3	600	3420	5.70	5.70	-
+S	4.600	1.960	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.3	2.13	7	7540	14261	1.96	1.88	-0.08-
	1.070	0.890	ZAKKA EDUCATION	21.2	0.00	3	1850	1697	0.91	0.92	+0.01+
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 110.32		CHNG: -0.71		37		27813		41959	
	4.000	1.840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.1	5.88	19	14480	26801	1.85	1.87	+0.02+
	11.250	9.970	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	10.4	8.27	4	120	1290	10.75	10.75	-
	4.450	2.850	JORDAN TANNING	7.5	8.60	2	1000	714	7.09	7.14	+0.05+
	1.820	1.260	INDUSTRIAL COM. AGR.	67.8	0.00	6	3160	3630	1.15	1.15	-
-S	5.740	2.400	ARAB F. RM. MFG.	7.2	2.88	38	27300	70068	2.59	2.60	+0.01+
	2.840	2.450	JORDAN DAIRY	6.1	10.10	3	350	963	2.75	2.75	-
	8.520	5.300	ARAB CHEM. DREGN.	7.9	7.00	1	100	714	7.09	7.14	+0.05+
	6.350	4.700	QAR ALDARA OV. INV.	6.3	6.70	12	5495	28679	5.20	5.22	+0.02+
	2.980	1.800	ARAB ALUM. IND.	13.1	14.12	5	1100	1954	1.85	1.77	-0.08-
	1.570	0.400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	14.5	0.00	2	1500	645	0.43	0.43	-
-S	3.690	1.880	GENERAL INVESTMENT	16.8	2.72	1	1000	3680	3.68	3.68	-
	6.990	4.70	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	9	0.00	2	250	113	0.47	0.45	-0.02-
	2.360	0.790	NATL. CABLE WIRE. HFAC	38.9	0.00	47	110750	90124	0.80	0.83	+0.03+
	1.730	0.510	JOR. SUBCON. CHEM.	9.7	0.00	2	750	383	0.51	0.51	-
	1.470	1.150	JOR. PHARM. CHEM.	13.9	4.76	3	1500	1890	1.25	1.26	+0.01+
	1.750	0.390	KAWTHER INVEST.	9	0.00	4	3200	1248	0.39	0.39	-
S	1.300	0.740	UNIV. MOON. INDS.	11.8	8.11	8	3300	2451	0.75	0.74	-0.01-
	1.060	0.500	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	9	0.00	1	1000	550	0.55	0.55	-
	1.600	1.200	NATL. CHLORINE	8.6	8.20	5	4690	5718	1.22	1.22	-
	1.080	0.750	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	10.6	13.33	2	1000	750	0.75	0.75	-
	1.510	1.150	TEL. CAY READY HEAR	41.2	0.00	2	1450	1697	1.17	1.17	-
+S	1.130	1.000	INTL. TOBACCO	6.9	5.89	3	480	474	1.00	0.99	-0.01-
S	1.220	0.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	9.6	0.00	2	349	303	0.87	0.87	-
	670	550	MID. EAST COMPLEX	10.5	0.00	4	4200	2436	0.59	0.58	-0.01-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 87.14		CHNG: +0.09		178		189325		254925	
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 178.87		CHNG: -0.23		332		314561		515312	
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 02/08/1998											
I	1.390	0.270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	500	205	0.39	0.41	+0.02+
	1.340	1.020	ZARA FOR INVESTMENT	68.2	0.00	2	11500	12170	1.05	1.04	-0.01-
	0.800	0.510	UNION INV.	9	0.00	2	2672	1362	0.51	0.51	-
	0.225	0.240	ARAB F. RM. INVEST.	9	0.00	2	2000	870	0.30	0.29	-0.01-
	0.100	0.790	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	9	0.00	5	25679	25678	1.00	1.00	-
	0.780	0.640	AL-DAMIRY	36.9	0.00	6	1440	909	0.64	0.64	-
I	2.225	1.055	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	3	6550	5736	1.20	1.24	+0.04+
	0.780	0.100	JOR. INDS. MATCH-TECHNO	9	0.00	1	400	48	0.12	0.12	-
	0.430	0.240	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	29.9	0.00	5	3500	910	0.25	0.26	+0.01+
	0.580	0.360	NATL. CABLE WIRE. HFAC	10.5	0.00	18	41000	15120	0.36	0.37	+0.01+
	0.690	0.500	KIDNEY PEARL. 90T	8	0.00	3	6400	3392	0.63	0.63	-
	1.750	0.950	UNION TOBACCO ST. 5Y	10.0	7.96	4	1733	2517	1.65	1.57	-0.08-
	0.350	0.220	INDS. ERG.	9	0.00	1	700	154	0.23	0.23	-
	0.750	0.380	INDS. CERAMIC	10.5	0.00	1	2000	800	0.38	0.40	+0.02+
S	0.950	0.550	ADVANCED PHARMA. IND.	9	0.00	6	34600	20314	0.59	0.59	-
	0.700	0.430	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	1	3000	1530	0.52	0.51	-0.01-
	0.580	0.370	NAT. ALUMINIUM	35.2	0.00	19	16900	11281	0.66	0.67	+0.01+
S	1.110	0.810	SUPREMA	12	0.00	12	6611	5447	0.81	0.83	+0.02+
+S	1.000	0.720	AL-KHARJ PRINTING CO	10.8	10.67	4	3500	2495	0.72	0.71	-0.01-
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 178.87		CHNG: -0.23		332		314561		515312	



# Look out Brisbane: Here come the Goodwill Games

NEW YORK (AFP) — Tragedy and controversy overshadowed a lackluster fortnight of competition at the fourth Goodwill Games, which conclude Sunday after going largely unnoticed in America's largest city.

The plight of paralysed 17-year-old Chinese gymnast Sang Lan, who suffered severe spinal cord damage July 21 in a warm-up vault, became the big story of the Games, which next go to Brisbane, Australia, in 2001.

"I don't think (Sang's tragedy) is something that will be the monicker of these Goodwill Games," Games president Mike Plant said.

"The worst is when something happens to an athlete like Sang Lan. That affects everyone deeply. Sports is a risky business. You have to see it happen. But everyone knows it can."

Other shocks included a defection by Cuban cyclist Ivan Dominguez, a Russian walkout threat that led to four boxing officials being banished and an Iranian political protest that halted the U.S.-Iran wrestling match.

The action had its moments. Michael Johnson anchored the United States 4x400-metre relay to a world record and South Africa's Penny Heyns set a 50m breaststroke world record on Saturday.

Maurice Greene beat Donovan Bailey and Ato Boldin in the 100m and Jackie Joyner-Kersey won her final heptathlon in the Games' other

brightest moments.

Plant said 350,000 tickets were distributed, but many went to sponsors. Typically popular figure skating seats were reduced to five dollars to entice fans, but most areas were well over half empty.

For the Goodwill Games, looking good on television was more important than being good in reality. With television presentation a top priority, seeking crowds took a back seat to appearing important on broadcasts.

"(Attendance) was a priority. It was out a top priority," Plant said. "We're happy with the numbers. This is a place on the planet more difficult to generate spectators than any other."

Time Warner, the corporate owner of the event, was willing to take a financial loss to create television programming for its networks, build ties for broader corporate partnerships and associate with sport figures.

"You always use the word investment," Plant said.

After an "investment" of \$109 million in the first three Games, Plant said Time Warner will not announce financial figures for the event but said these would be the most financially successful Games.

That means losses could still have reached \$20 million but with a continued cutback in the number of sport offerings and athletes, spending cuts

have likely lowered the firm's bottom-line bad news.

In fact, organisers plan to launch a Goodwill Winter Games in 2000, most likely in Lake Placid, New York.

"I have got people all over me to get it done. It's like this close," said Plant, bolding two fingers barely apart. "We're going to do something in 2000."

Organisers will analyse these Games for six months to prepare a plan for 2001 in Brisbane, looking at such factors as a team swim format that forced top swimmers into several events, dimming world record chances.

Brisbane for 2001 has 12 sports planned over 12 days, dropping water polo, wrestling, synchronised swimming and women's football from the New York lineup while adding weightlifting.

But additions were made here from the original plan and Plant said that could happen again, hinting at a sport popular the world over.

"There are 50 golf courses on the Gold Coast," he said. "We will have to see what we can do there."

## Owen shines as Liverpool win

DUBLIN (AFP) — England star Michael Owen grabbed his first goal since his World Cup heroics as Liverpool beat English Premiership rivals Leeds to win the four-team Carlsberg Trophy here on Saturday.

It was Owen's first start in Liverpool's pre-season build-up and the club's vast Irish following in the 30,000 crowd erupted after 56 minutes when he collected a ball from Paul Ince, cut across a defender and smashed a 20-yard drive inside the far post.

Owen could have had a hat-trick in the first half, was unlucky not to win a penalty, and troubled Leeds with his searing pace all afternoon.

A minute before Owen's goal, Czech star Patrik Berger had put Liverpool ahead with a 20-metre drive following good work from Steve McManaman.

In the third place play-off, Italian giants Lazio — who had £60 million (\$100 million) of talent on show — beat the Irish part-timers of St Patrick's Athletic 4-1.

## Hakkinen wins German GP

HOCKENHEIM, Germany (AFP) — Mika Hakkinen of Finland scored his sixth win of the season and built an impressive world championship lead when he took out Sunday's German Grand Prix in a McLaren-Mercedes.

Hakkinen's McLaren teammate David Coulthard of Scotland finished second as the McLaren team recorded their fifth 1-2 finish of the year.

Jacques Villeneuve of Canada was third in a Williams for his first podium finish of the season.

Hakkinen increased his world drivers' championship lead over Germany's Michael Schumacher (Ferrari) to 16 points with only five races remaining.

"We've got a great package — a very good car and very good tyres," said Hakkinen.

Damon Hill of Britain finished fourth in a Jordan — his first driver's world championship points for almost 12 months — while two-time world champion Schumacher was fifth and his brother Ralf sixth in the second Jordan.

Hakkinen and Coulthard led from start to finish in a race that was something of a procession.

"I thought at one stage I may have been able to get past," said Coulthard. "It's very difficult, though, when you are racing against someone driving the same car as you. It's hard to get past a car with the same performance as you."

The Flying Finn won the start from Coulthard with Ralf Schumacher third followed by Villeneuve and Hill.



World championships leader Mika Hakkinen of Finland raises his arms in celebration after taking the victory in his McLaren Mercedes in the German Formula One Grand Prix in Hockenheim August 2. Teammate David Coulthard of Scotland placed second while Canada's world champion Jacques Villeneuve took the third place (Reuters photo)

Michael Schumacher blasted off after starting ninth on the grid, moving up to seventh.

The brilliance of Schumacher prevented a potential pile-up as the Benetton of Austrian Alexander Wurz stalled directly in front of the German.

Schumacher dived across to the other side of the track to avoid hitting Wurz, with Heinz-Harald Frentzen in the Williams fortunate not to have his nose cone removed in the process.

From that point on, however, there was little for the 130,000 German crowd to cheer.

Hakkinen clocked 1hr 20min 47.984sec for 45 laps of the fast 6.833km track, a total of 307.035km. He averaged 227.997kph and won by just 0.4secs from Coulthard as the pair celebrated re-signing for the team with a superb result.

Hakkinen, starting from his eighth career pole, came into the pits on lap 26, briefly banding the lead to Coulthard, but only until the Scot pitted himself a lap later.

With 30 laps gone, there was briefly consternation in the McLaren pits even though Hakkinen and Coulthard had a 5-sec advantage over third-placed Villeneuve.

The Canadian then began to reduce the deficit but couldn't get within striking distance of Hakkinen, who scored his seventh career win.

"It felt great that I could keep up with Mika today," said Villeneuve. "But then seven laps from the end something broke on my car and I had to slow up a bit."

It was the seventh race win of the year for McLaren, who increased their lead over Ferrari in the constructors' championship to 26 points.

## Heyns sets world record in 50-metre breaststroke

NEW YORK (AFP) — South Africa's Penny Heyns set a 50-metre breaststroke world record of 30.95 seconds here Saturday, the second world mark for the 1996 Olympic 100m and 200m breaststroke champion.

Heyns set the 50m breaststroke record in the first half of a 100m breaststroke victory for the World All-Stars in a dual meet at the Goodwill Games, capturing the race in 1:09.46.

"I knew it could be done," Heyns said. "I'm very pleased with my time. I didn't set out to break the record because I knew I had another 50 to swim to finish the race."

In January, world governing body FINA approved recognition of world records in the 50m backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly events. They had previously been called world best times.

Heyns, who set a 100 breaststroke world record of 1:07.02 at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, smashed the 50m breaststroke mark of 31.58 seconds set in 1988 by then-East German Silke Horner.

The World All-Stars beat

China 86-35 to finish second in the team event behind the United States, which beat Germany 78-44 to finish as unbeaten champions.

Heyns captured both individual Goodwill Games titles, leading the way in the 100 in 1:08.14 and the 200 in 2:26.73. The roots of Heyns' record swim came two days ago when she had her meet-winning 100m swim.

"Thursday night I swam well and saw what I had to do," Heyns said.

World champion Michelle Kwan skated well in her last performance to "Lyla Angelica" to capture the Goodwill women's figure skating title despite falling on her triple toe loop.

"I felt great up to the loop and the fall shook me up," Kwan said. "After the mistake, I knew what I had to do. I practice when you make a mistake you always want to do the next thing great."

Kwan received 5.9s from all seven judges for presentation in her routine for an easy triumph over Russian runner-up Maria Butyrskaya and third-place Victoria Volchkova, a



South Africa's Penny Heyns in action during the breaststroke leg of the 4x100 metre medley relay at the Goodwill Games August 1 in Uniondale, Long Island, NY. Double Olympic champion Heyns swam the fastest-ever 50 metres in the 100-metre breaststroke at the Goodwill Games (Reuters photo)

Russian in her first major event.

In boxing, Juan Hernandez, a 1996 Olympic silver medalist, gave Cuba its fifth Goodwill title by defeating Russia's Gaidarbekov 16-5 in the 71-kilogramme final.

Kazakhstan's Jaiilauov won the 51kg title, outpunching American Roberto Benitez 15-14. Australia's Pauline Manser and Kerri Pottharst defeated Americans Lisa Arce and Holly McPeak 12-11, 11-12, 12-6, to reach the

beach volleyball final Sunday against world number ones Shelda Bede and Adriana Behar. The Brazilians beat Italy's Laura Bruschini and Annamaria Solazzi 12-5, 12-7 and expect a fight in the final.

Pottharst, who won Atlanta Olympic bronze with ex-partner Natalie Cook, and Manser are ranked sixth in the world. They rose to 3-1 against Arce and McPeak this year but are 0-5 against Bede and Behar in 1998.

"Pauline and I started the season together and finished second in Brazil," Pottharst said. "To make the final and beat two U.S. teams on U.S. soil is really encouraging for the future."

The only event after the beach volleyball final at the Games is the finish of men's swim dual meet competition, where the World All-Stars can claim gold by defeating Germany.

World champions and Olympic silver medalists Anjelika Krylova and Olga Ovsianukova of Russia won the ice dance title.

## Agassi and Henman set up Los Angeles showdown

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Red-hot Andre Agassi and Wimbledon semi-finalist Tim Henman posted straight-set victories Saturday to reach the final of the \$340,000 ATP Tour event here.

Second-seeded Henman, playing his first tournament since he reached the final four at Wimbledon, overcame an early break in the first set to beat unseeded Frenchman Guillaume Raoux 7-5, 6-3.

Agassi, the fifth seed, captured his 10th straight match on the ATP Tour with a 6-0, 7-6 (7/2) win over fellow American Justin Gimelstob.

Raoux, playing in the semi-finals here for the second year in a row, drew first blood when he broke Henman in the third game of the opening set. He fought off a break point in the next game, but Henman finally leveled the set with a break for 3-3.

They stayed on serve, neither with a chance to break, until the final game of the set, when three backhand errors from Raoux gave Henman a set point, on which the Frenchman sailed a forehand wide.

Henman grabbed the only break of the second set to lead 3-1, and wrapped up the match with an ace and two service winners, the last at 133 miles per hour. In all he fired eight aces in the one-hour, 19-minute match.

"Early on, he was hitting the ball really, really hard," Henman said. "It was tough, because he wasn't missing much. It was very important to get back on level terms pretty early. That's what allowed me to be more aggressive."

Henman, ranked 12th in the world, advanced to his second final of the year, after his runner-up finish in Sydney in January. He has never before played Agassi, the former World No. 1 now ranked 13th.

"It's always exciting when you play someone of Agassi's stature in the game," Henman said. "To play in a final obviously makes it extra special."

Henman, who has practiced often with Agassi this year, said he would have to stick to his serve-and-volley style.

"I need to serve consistently," Henman said. "I don't think I'm going to beat him from the back of the court."

Since falling in the second round at Wimbledon, Agassi has been virtually untouchable. His 10-match streak included a run to the title in Washington on Sunday — his third of the year.

His form is a far cry from last year, which he ended ranked 122nd in the world.

"It's two different players out there," Agassi said of his 1997 and 1998 selves. "In every single department I'm a different player than I was last year."

Agassi was ranked 32nd in the world and sliding at this tournament last year when Gimelstob stunned him in the first round.

This year Gimelstob's marquee triumph came against Australian top seed Pat Rafter in the quarter-finals on Friday.

But a slow start thwarted the 21-year-old's bid to reach the first ATP Tour final of his career.

"I didn't come out firing," Gimelstob said. "Agassi is not the kind of guy you can just roll into the match."

"A lot of guys you could spin your serve in and play the point. With Agassi, you really need to put hard serves close to the line."

Gimelstob scattered six aces and five double faults through the one-hour, 14-minute match. In the second set he got better control of his serve and cut down his unforced errors, although he still could do little to pressure Agassi's serve.

Even so, Agassi said the second set could easily have gone either way, especially after he failed to make good on either of his two break chances in the opening game.

"I felt pressure from him the entire second set," Agassi said. "With a guy like him, you're never confident unless you have a break. You feel like a few big swings from the big fellow and you're in a world of trouble."

## Williams beats Seles to join Davenport in final

STANFORD (AP) — Venus Williams slammed 12 aces, including one on the first point of the match and another on the final point, to beat Monica Seles 6-3, 6-4 on Saturday night in the Bank of the West semifinals.

Williams, seeded third, will face top-seeded Lindsay Davenport on Sunday in the final of the \$450,000 tournament.

Davenport beat Steffi Graf 6-4, 6-7 (4-7), 6-3 in the afternoon semifinal. Williams dominated on her serve throughout the match. Even when she wasn't piling up aces, Williams was hitting service winners and forcing the second-seeded Seles to virtually bunk back other serves.

The only time Seles threatened to break Williams' serve was in the fourth game of the second set, but the 1.87-metre Williams fought off three break points to hold her serve.

"Obviously, I've never played any one as tall as Venus. She mixed it up

very well," Seles said. "She does a very good variety on her serve. I really love that part of her game. I wish I had that serve and that athletic ability."

Williams, 17-1 in tournaments in the United States this year, said she was happy with the spin on her serves, and on the way she showed Seles several different types of serves.

"You have to work on that, because it's easy to become one-dimensional and just serve to your favorite space and the person is just waiting there," she said.

It was the first meeting between the two players.

In the first semifinal, Graf was undermined by unforced errors and an erratic backhand. Graf's serve remains strong and her forehand is as dangerous as ever, but a long layoff following knee surgery has robbed her of the consistency that once was among Graf's trademarks.

Davenport, ranked third in the world, had lost in the semifinals of this tournament five of the previous six years.

She reached her first final in the event by using her consistent play to take advantage of Graf's mistakes.

"I think I've picked up my game a lot, I'm a little more consistent," Davenport said. "People say she (Graf) has been out for a year and a half and she's not ranked that high anymore, but it's still a good win."

Graf was seeded fourth despite falling to No. 57 in the world since having reconstructive left knee surgery last year. The women's tour has given her a special co-ranking of No. 7 until the U.S. Open, allowing Graf to be seeded at this and two other tournaments.

Graf has had a difficult recovery from the knee surgery. Her comeback has been stalled by other injuries, and she became so frustrated earlier this year that she considered retiring.

She said Saturday's match, which lasted more than two hours in intense heat, was a good way of judging how far she still has to go in her comeback.

"I haven't had a lot of matches or three setters in the past 1 1/2 years, so it's definitely something that makes me realize what I have to work on," said Graf, who was cramping in both legs in the third set. "There are a few things that I have to work on — definitely return of serve."

Graf said she just ran out of energy in the final set.

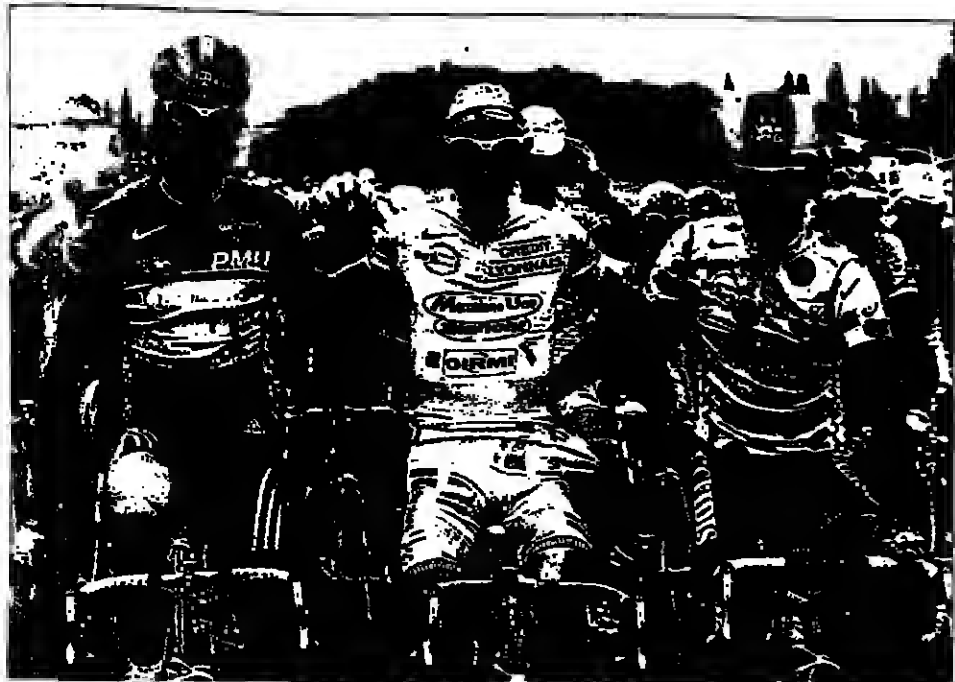
"I wish I would have had something left in the third set," she said. "In the third set, from 3-1 on I didn't know how to move anymore."

The players stayed on serve in the third set until Davenport broke in the eighth game to go up 5-3. She then served out the match, getting to match point on a net cord and wrapping up the victory with an overhead put-away.

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1'	PHILADELPHIA 2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
	Leonardo DiCaprio...in	Comedian Adel Imam .. in	Comedian Adel Imam .. in	Adel Imam & Yusra... in	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Gallria	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Gallria	STARTING JULY 13TH
	THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK	AL ZA'EEM	AL ZA'EEM	A LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR	Comedian Adel Imam .. in	Comedian Adel Imam .. in	The Authority in the Service of the People
	Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD L.C. DRACULA Shows: 3:30 only	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Shows: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	Starring Hisham Yanes and the group

For reservations call: 4646155, 4625155





Tour de France leader Marco Pantani of Italy (C) is flanked by green jersey winner for best sprinter Erik Zabel of Germany (L) and polka-dot jersey for best climber Christophe Rinero of France during the 147.5-km 21st and final stage of the Tour de France cycling race on the famous Parisian avenue Champs-Elysees August 2. Pantani, barring disaster in the final leg, will become the first Italian to win cycling's most prestigious race in 33 years and the first Italian since Fausto Coppi in 1952 to win the Giro and the Tour in the same year (Reuters photo)

## Tour de France Telekom keeping faith with Ullrich and Co.

LE CREUSOT, France (AFP) — German cycling sponsors Deutsche Telekom said Saturday they would keep faith with the sport despite the drug allegations which have cast a pall of gloom over this year's Tour de France.

"The doping scandals are a dreadful business but Telekom will not pull out just because of a few black sheep. On the contrary we will try to do something about it," said spokesman Jurgen Kindervater. Telekom's insistence that it will honour its contract, which lasts through to 2001, is good news for last year's Tour winner Jan Ullrich, who lies second in this year's race behind Italian Marco Pantani going into Sunday's final stage from Melon to Paris.

"From the beginning of our partnership we have given clean and fair play in sport preference over success," said Kindervater.

"Now we want to try to come up with suggestions on working out even stronger (doping) controls. And we hope we can get other sponsors on board and not just rely on the International Cycling Union (UCI)," he added.

Top team officials will meet on Thursday in Bonn with medical experts from the Freihurg University

clinic in Bonn to discuss the doping issue.

Kindervater, who noted that German interest in cycling was as great as ever, said he was confident that the drugs ban would have been lifted in time for next year's Tour.

Ullrich earlier won the 20th and penultimate stage, a 52km time trial.

It was his third stage win this year.

His Danish teammate Bjarne Riis, the Tour winner in 1996 and the riders' spokesman, meanwhile called on the UCI to take a hard line on doping and provide guidance to the riders. "They must take a clear line and save cycling," said 34-year-old Riis.

"We have accepted blood tests but now we must go further. The UCI must show us the way. We riders are ready to back them and help them."

He added that Telekom riders largely supported the investigations into the doping allegations which have hit the sport, even if some riders were unhappy with the treatment of riders from Dutch team TVM, who were held into the early hours and interrogated by police.

"What the courts are doing is necessary for the development of cycling if it is to be cleaned up," Riis

said.

Casino rider Rodolfo Massi of Italy, charged with "inciting and facilitating the use and employment of doping products" as well as "importing, distributing and transferring poisonous substances", meanwhile returned to Italy on Saturday. Massi, the former King of the Mountains leader, has denied taking drugs but was interviewed by police after cortizone steroids and other products were found in his hotel room at Chambéry on Wednesday night.

The Italian, who has been released under strict conditions, repeated his innocence and told reporters: "I am at ease with myself because these accusations are absolutely groundless. But I am worried about my future," he admitted.

He said the substances in his room were common painkillers whose use was perfectly legal in Italy. "And I would only even have taken them after consultation with my team doctor," Massi insisted.

Massi has been freed on 50,000 francs (around \$8,000) bail but may not race and must not associate riders. He must also make himself available to judges investigating his case.

## JOC official hopes most federations will participate in Asian Games

### JD70,000 disbursed to 9 of 19 sports competing in Pan-Arab Games

By Aileen Bannayan  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) has expressed hope that this year's Asian Games in Bangkok will be a serious chance to prepare the Kingdom's teams for the July-August 1999 Pan-Arab Games in Amman.

JOC Vice-President Mouaffaq Al Fawwaz said only 12 federations had submitted their applications to compete at the Bangkok Games which he described as a "golden opportunity."

"The Asian Games are an invaluable opportunity to prepare and assess our teams. But it seems only federations serious about both events have applied to take part. I hope the rest will follow suit."

Another good chance to prepare promising athletes is through training courses offered by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to six outstanding athletes for a period of 6 months before the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

"Since Jordan is one of the countries that does not qualify to the Olympics through international events, we get wild cards qualifiers in individual sports. The IOC therefore offers these training courses to excellent athletes to raise their competitive level."

He added that another three training courses are available to promising athletes. "We hope federations will make use of these chances in time. These are excellent opportunities if they are made use of," he said.

Fawwaz said 19 federations had submitted their plans to the JOC to get funding for their Pan-Arab Games preparations.

"We have 26 sports federations and 19 have presented their plans for the Pan-Arab Games. However, we have so far set 12 primary games while the other 7 are still undecided."

"For this reason we have asked the rest of the federations to contact their counterparts in Arab countries and if over 5 countries express willingness to compete in a certain event then we can add more games to the original list."

He said there are 10 compulsory games and optional ones which the host country could add.

The 10 compulsory games for men are: basketball, athletics, gymnastics, volleyball, handball, swimming, soccer, wrestling, weightlifting and cycling. Optional ones include squash, taekwondo and karate.

The 8 compulsory games for women are: basketball, athletics, gymnastics, volleyball, handball, swimming, taekwondo and karate.

Fawwaz said JD11 million was earmarked for the Games with JD4 million allocated for spending this year. The government has approved the loan to the JOC by a soft loan drawn from the Social Security Corporation.

However, the JOC official again warned that the pace of work was too slow.

"All teams should have started training. What's more there are facilities to be built. We need serious, dedicated effort to make the

event a success."

He said the JOC has asked federations to prepare their 1998-99 training plans with the needed funds but added that some of them had exaggerated figures which were illogical.

With the disbursement mechanism now finalised, over JD70,000 has been given out to nine federations: Cycling (JD2,000), wrestling (JD6,000), gymnastics (JD15,000), soccer (16,000), handball (JD7,000), volleyball (JD6,000), weightlifting (JD10,000), table tennis (JD14,42) and squash (JD6,000).

Fawwaz explained that the JOC has undertaken to pay the salaries of qualified coaches and asked federations to increase training and assess preparedness through training camps abroad.

Since the Arab Sports Federation (ASF) advanced the date of the upcoming games to 1999 instead of 2001, the Council of Arab Sports Ministers increased aid to the Kingdom to enable it to prepare infrastructure and update sports facilities ahead of the largest gathering of Arab youth.

Aid from the Arab League had been raised to \$200,000 while the Council of Arab Ministers will grant \$1,000,000 instead of \$700,000.

Additional sponsorship for Jordan's bid will be garnered through slashing the 50 per cent ASF margin of profit on promotion and television coverage in addition to selling television broadcasting rights to private companies, which would secure millions needed to cover costs.

The JOC official said infrastructure plans included the building of a multi purpose indoor stadium at Al Hussein Youth City with a capacity for 7,000 spectators; an Olympic-size swimming pool; a track and field stadium and electronic timing machines.

He pointed out that the rest of the facilities would be utilised at private universities and educational institutions that have already expressed their willingness to host some of the events.

Lebanon, which hosted the 8th Pan-Arab Games last summer, received \$28 million from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to help in construction of sport facilities destroyed during the civil war.

The 1997 Beirut Games witnessed the best Jordanian showing since the Pan-Arab Games were launched. Competing in 14 of the 20 events, Jordan finished 5th overall among 19 competing countries, taking a total of 40 medals, including 10 gold, 8 silver and 22 bronze medals.

Jordan's athletes gained more gold medals in Beirut than in all the past 7 Pan-Arab Games together where they took a total of 49 medals, including 7 gold, 16 silver, 26 bronze.

The Amman Games will be followed by a Special Arab Games for the Handicapped.

The Pan-Arab Games have only been held eight times: Alexandria in 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Morocco 1985, Damascus 1992 and Beirut 1997.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Ajax beat Monchengladbach in friendly

BOCHOLT (AFP) — Dutch champions Ajax beat German first division side Borussia Monchengladbach 3-1 in a pre-season friendly match here on Saturday. Ajax got goals from Georgian Georgi Kinkladze, Dane Ole Tobiasen and Finn Jari Litmanen — all within the first 25 minutes — while Monchengladbach's second-half strike came from Austrian international Toni Polster, a close-season signing from relegated Cologne.

### Benfica down Newcastle on penalties

MIDDLESBROUGH (AFP) — Portuguese giants Benfica will face Italian side Empoli in Sunday's final of the four-team friendly tournament at Riverside Stadium. Gary Speed and substitute Ralph Keidel missed spot-kicks as Newcastle lost 4-3 in a penalty shoot-out to Benfica after the sides drew 0-0 on Saturday afternoon. Newcastle now face a third-place play-off

on Sunday against fellow English Premiership side Middlesbrough. Empoli beat the home side 1-0 thanks to Fabio Artico's 81st-minute strike.

### Shearer vows to stay at Newcastle

LONDON (AFP) — England international striker Alan Shearer has pledged his future to Newcastle United, dismissing reports that he could quit the Magpies if they have a poor season in the English Premiership. "I signed a five-year contract when I joined Newcastle and I'll be very surprised if I don't see it through," Shearer told News of the World. "I'm committed to the club as I have ever been. I've only been back in training a few days but I'm excited and eager about the start of the new season. "I came here to win the game's honours and I don't see why those ambitions cannot be satisfied at Newcastle. My thoughts are shared by everyone at St James' Park, especially Kenny Dalglish. He is one of the most ambitious people I know."

National League				American League			
Atlanta	3	St Louis	1	Boston	11	Anheim	1
Chicago Cubs	1	Colorado	2	California	9	Cleveland	3 (10 innings)
Houston	2	Pittsburgh	1	Florida	2	Minnesota	2
Cincinnati	9	Philadelphia	7 (10 innings)	Los Angeles	8	San Diego	10
Montreal	4	San Diego	1	Seattle	2	St. Louis	1
San Francisco	8	Philadelphia	7 (10 innings)	Texas	8	White Sox	1
NY Mets	2	Los Angeles	1				
Arizona	5	Milwaukee	4				

## Recordman Malcolm takes sprint double at World Junior Athletics Championships

ANNECY, France (AFP)

— Briton Christian Malcolm claimed his second world junior title here on Saturday as he took out the 200 metres in a championship record time of 20.44 seconds, the second fastest time by a European male, senior or junior, this year.

There was joy at last, too, for host nation France as outstanding 200 metres prospect Muriel Hurts won the women's title by beating America's 100 metres titleholder Shakedia Jones.

The 19-year-old Malcolm, who won the 100m in a world championship record of 10.12sec earlier in the week, thrashed the field easing home metres ahead of Dutch Antillian Jairo Duzant, who ran a national record of 20.92 on his 19th birthday, and Russell Frye of the United States who continued the American men's team run without a gold medal by taking bronze.

"The 200 is difficult because it's too long! It gives you the chance to think about other things so I just told myself coming off the bend to keep my form," said Malcolm, the Welsh-born son of Jamaican parents.

Malcolm, who chose athletics ahead of playing football for Nottingham Forest at the age of 15 because he thought it was a friendlier

sport, added that he had been flattered by the praise heaped on him by former Olympic gold medallists Carl Lewis and Alan Wells. "I'm really shocked that they were so impressed, but I'm also extremely flattered," he said.

Hurts, also 19, had a tough battle with Jones and coming off the bend it looked touch and go but the elegant Frenchwoman, spurred on by the crowd, dug deep into her reserves and bested the American, with British girl Sarah Wilhelmy a fine third.

"I thought after the semi-final when I also beat Jones that the final would be easier but she's tough and it was really my unwillingness to surrender that got me the gold," said Hurts, who emulated compatriot Sylviane Felix's gold in Sydney in 1996.

"The time wasn't that good, but it was the title I wanted and I got it," she added.

Jones, who trains with France's double Olympic champion Marie-Jose Perce, vowed revenge in Sunday's 4x100 relay.

"I was tired after eight races since Tuesday but Hurts is a tough competitor and will be a force in the senior ranks, she's got guts," Jones said.

The Kenyans made it three out of three 1-2's in the men's distance events

as Ruben Kosgei and Abraham Cherono dominated the 3,000 metres steeplechase.

Kosgei, who is only 16, sped away from Cherono at the bell, the two having left the remainder trailing with two laps to go, and despite losing time as he wandered from lane to lane finished in 8:23.76, breaking the championship record by almost eight seconds.

Cherono eased off the pedal on the final lap but had more than enough in hand on bronze medallist El Mostapha Mellouk of

Morocco.

"As usual, we ran a tactical race and it worked out how we wanted it to. It doesn't matter which of us wins because we are a team," said Cherono.

There was an equally impressive performance in the women's discus as China's Fengying Liu threw 60.66 metres, beating silver medallist Milna Robert Michon of France by over five metres. It was the largest victory margin ever recorded at these championships.

"I'm disappointed as I

wanted to go over 62 metres, but we had such a long journey and were held by customs for so long that it affected me," Liu said, echoing the words of China's 400 metres winner Yulian Li.

Michon, who had qualified in first place for the final, was satisfied with her second place.

"It's my first major championships so obviously I'm delighted with winning a medal. Now I will go to Budapest for the European senior championships and gain more experience

there," she said.

In other finals Sabine Zimmer of Germany won the 5,000 metres walk, Russian Marina Knptsova gave her country their third gold medal in two days as she captured the high jump, while Slovakian Mikulas Kouptka took the men's shot put title ahead of South African junior world record holder Janus Roberts.

Ionut Punga of Romania woo the men's triple jump with a world best for the year of 16.94 metres, China's women captured

yet another gold as Pekka Karjalainen of Shengfei Shen triumphed in Finland won the men's heptathlon and Olli hammer.

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